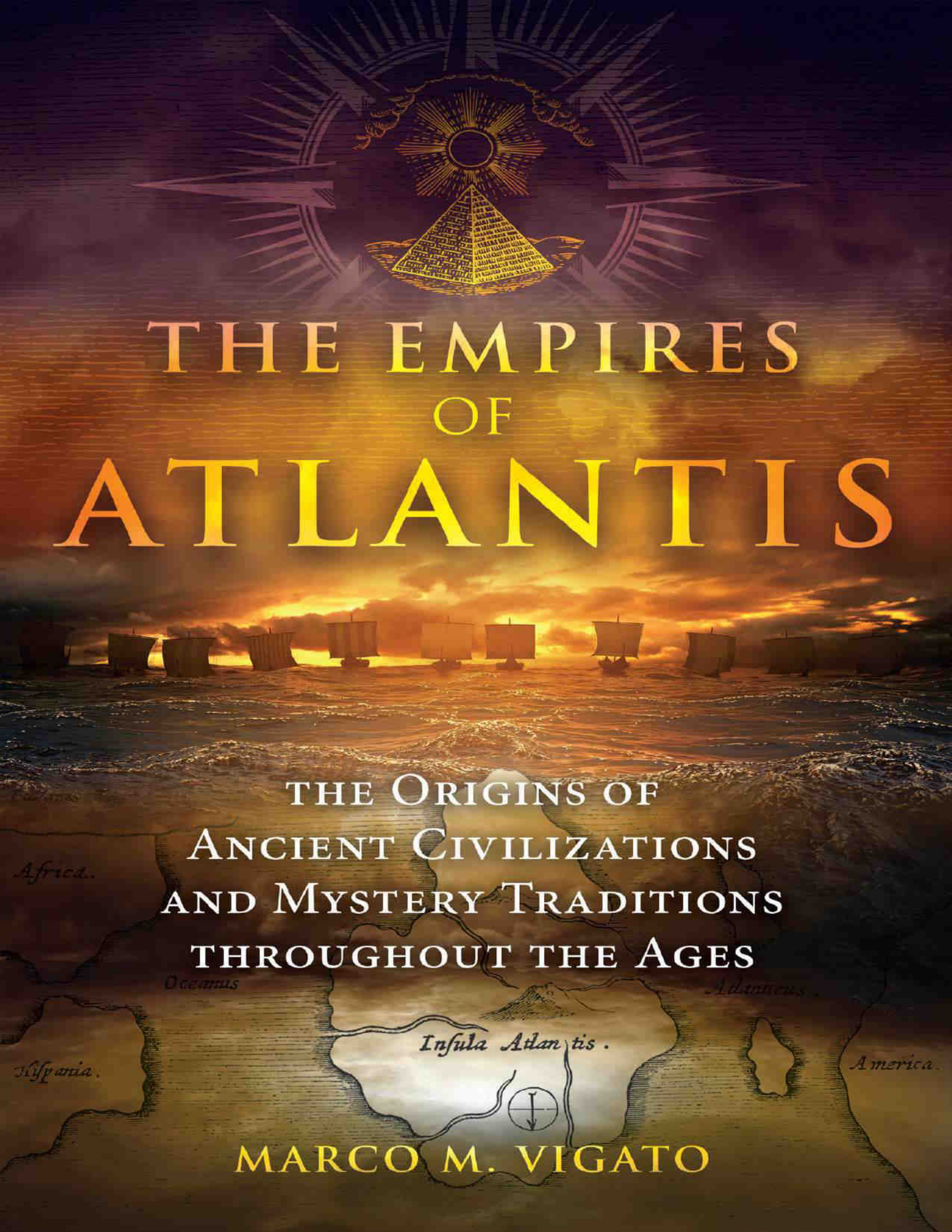
THE EMPIRES
OF
ATLANTIS
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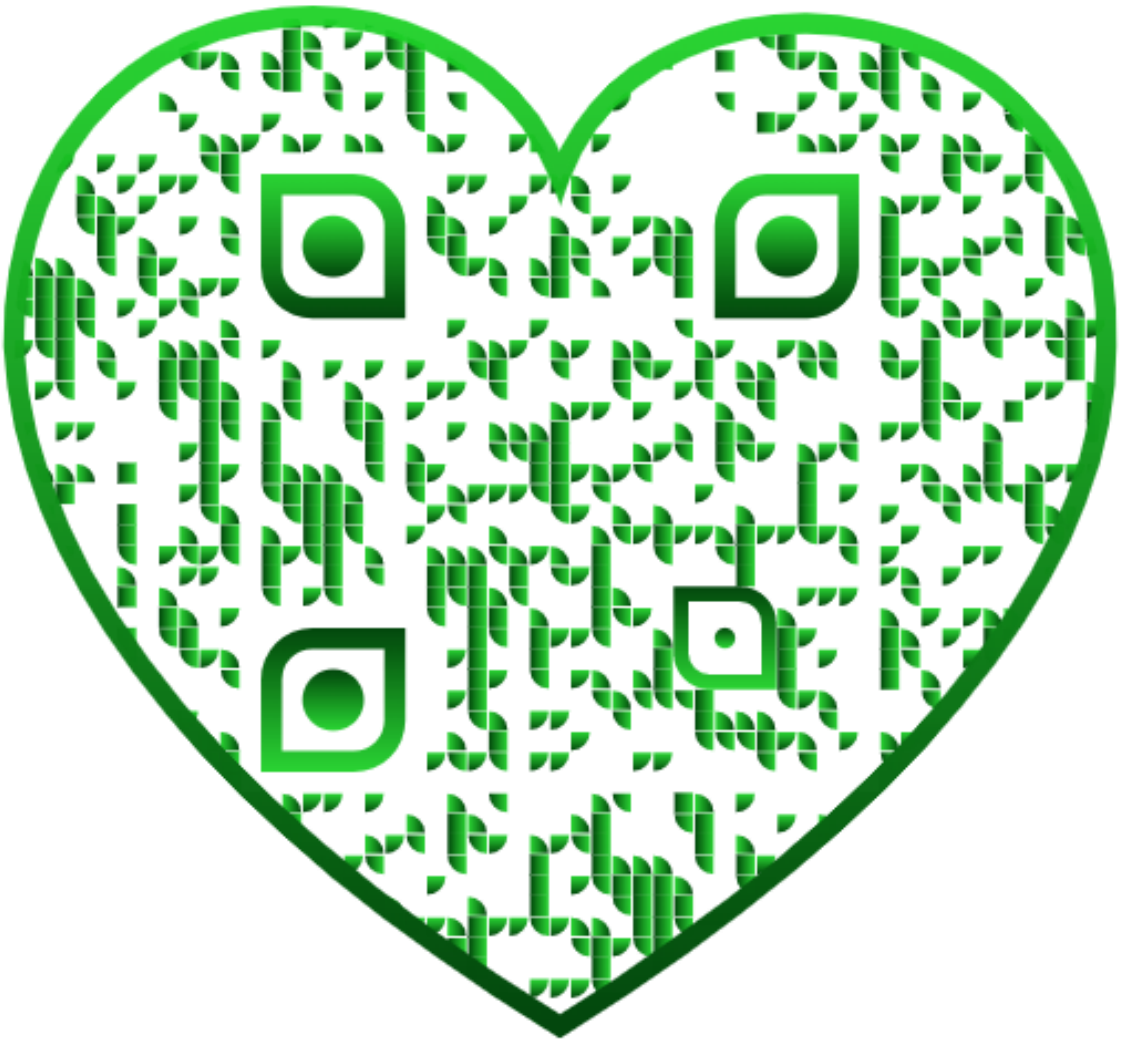

THE EMPIRES OF ATLANTIS

The Origins of Ancient Civilizations and Mystery Traditions throughout the Ages

MARCO M. VIGATO

Bear & Company
Rochester, Vermont

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INTRODUCTION

AMONG THE RUINS

> *"Nothing will remain, but an empty tale, which thy own children in times to come will not believe; nothing will be left but graven words, and only the stones will tell of thy piety."*
>
> ASCLEPIUS, *CORPUS HERMETICUM*, III

Teotihuacan, March 21, 2016. The day of the spring equinox. Soon after taking off from the Mexico City International Airport, 50 kilometers (31 miles) north of the sprawling Mexican capital, the airplane steers over the ruins of Teotihuacan, still shrouded in the morning mist 10,000 feet below.

Like a great mandala, the ancient city stretches over the 5-kilometerlong (3.1 miles) Avenue of the Dead, bordered by ceremonial platforms leading up to the dark, looming masses of the Pyramids of the Sun and the Moon. Even from this altitude, the scale of construction and the almost superhuman regularity and precision of the city's layout are fully apparent, as if one were not looking at buildings designed around the needs of human habitation, but rather at the scattered gears of some long-forgotten machinery.

And indeed, this place was not built for ordinary people. It was a city of the gods, the embodiment of a universal order in stone, believed to have been

raised out of the primordial darkness by the gods themselves.

According to the early Spanish chronicler and Franciscan friar Bernardino de Sahagún (1500–1590), this is the place where the gods gathered after the Flood so that the sun—*the fifth sun of our era*—might be born again. Huge crowds convene every year at Teotihuacan to celebrate the annual recurrence of that miracle. Thousands of years before, a group of sages known as the Tlamatinime, were said to have come to these same shores from a land beyond the sea to worship their father and creator, the sun. They established a new calendar, and they taught the primitive people of the Valley of Mexico the art of building in stone and the science of astronomy and agriculture. Then, they left toward the East, "taking with them their sacred books and the images of their Gods."[1] However, one day, they promised, they would return.

Who were these sages, and where did they come from? What mission were they trying to accomplish?

The purpose of this book is to provide an answer to these questions and to many others concerning the origin of civilization and of the many mysterious sites and traditions throughout the world that speak of strange gods and a long-lost golden age.

This is a nonconventional book that combines two radically different approaches: that of modern science and that of the Western esoteric tradition. The product is an entirely new picture of the true origins of civilization.

We find ourselves at a turning point in Western civilization, which also calls for a new understanding of our past. The conventional views of academia, which have held ground for the past two hundred years, rely on a positivistic idea of progress, according to which a linear thread of evolution can be followed from mankind's obscure beginnings as hunter-gatherers to the diffusion of agriculture and the birth of the first Neolithic urban communities in the Near East, all the way down to the first historical empires. These views are every day being challenged by new discoveries that only appear to push further back in time the origins of civilization.

On the opposite end of the debate, the esoteric tradition denies any materialistic idea of progress and sees time as cyclical. By these canons, cycles of creation alternate with cycles of destruction. The only true progress possible is outside the boundaries of the material world.

Atlantis lives somewhere between these two worlds, that of scientific rationalism and that of the esoteric tradition. The rationalists have too often ignored the numerous esoteric and occult contributions to the subject, whereas the students of the esoteric tradition have no less frequently disregarded the testimony of science. Both approaches are equally necessary to understanding the true origins of civilization. Each one discloses different avenues of knowledge that should ultimately lead to the same fundamental truths.

Most ancient and contemporary authors on Atlantis have tried to portray it as a relatively circumscribed episode of high civilization that ended in cataclysm around 9600 BCE. This book will demonstrate that Atlantean civilization did *not* vanish "in a terrible day and night,"[2] as Plato stated, but survived, albeit in different form, well into the historical period. Throughout this time, it remained remarkably loyal to the fundamental tenets of its sacred science. This is perhaps the greatest and most enduring monument left to us from our Atlantean past, for its influence is not limited by the duration of Atlantean civilization but also extends well into the present epoch.

PART I

ESOTERIC HISTORY

1

WORLDS BEFORE OUR OWN

The search for the physical evidence of humanity's first great civilization will take us on a veritable journey of discovery around the world. Some of the sites discussed in this book will be certainly familiar to most readers— places such as the Great Pyramid of Egypt, the ruins of Tiwanaku in Bolivia, and the citadel of Machu Picchu in Peru. Other sites perhaps less famous or only recently brought to the attention of the general public will nevertheless hold equally important clues to the true history of the human race.

What will emerge from this journey is the realization of a pattern of sacred sites and places of power established thousands of years ago by people with a very peculiar mission to accomplish—to resurrect the primeval world of the gods and initiate a new golden age.

In this book, we will work to demonstrate that a fundamental episode of civilization occurred more than ten thousand years ago. This civilization, which we may call Atlantis, left its mark over the traditions of nearly every culture on the planet that either directly or indirectly derived from it.

While this will sound like far-fetched speculation to many who are used to thinking in terms of a purely linear progression and evolution of human societies, evidence is mounting both within and outside of the scientific community for a radical reassessment of our views of prehistory and the origin of civilization.

Far from being unsophisticated cave dwellers, our remote ancestors do

not cease to surprise us with the level of their scientific and cultural achievements. To show that these were not mere isolated sparkles of genius in the long night of prehistory but rather the *legacy* of a much greater and far older civilization will be the purpose of this book.

One does not need to go much farther than the south of France to find evidence of this prehistoric genius, already extant forty thousand years ago. Truly, the art of the Chauvet and Lascaux caves has nothing primitive to it, but it strikes us with its sophistication and complexity. It is often quoted that, upon exiting the cave of Lascaux in Dordogne—often called the Sistine Chapel of cave art—an awed Pablo Picasso declared, "We have learned nothing in twelve thousand years."[1] On one thing, however, Picasso was wrong: the stunning depictions of bulls, horses, aurochs, and other Ice Age fauna that grace the walls and ceilings of the Lascaux cave are at least 17,300 years old. The equally impressive Chauvet cave in Ardeche is even older, at almost 32,000 years.[2]

Yet for centuries, cave art was ignored, even dismissed as a clever prank. Its subtlety and refinement were believed impossible for such an early age. Today, new findings keep pushing back in time the beginnings of abstract thought and artistic expression.

More intriguing still is the possibility that Ice Age man may have possessed more than a passing interest in astronomy. Professor Michael Rappenglueck of the University of Munich has gone so far as to suggest that the Lascaux paintings contain accurate prehistoric star charts, with some of the larger animal figures correlating with the position of the constellations of Taurus, Orion, and the Pleiades in the sky.[3] He also noticed that the main cave opening points to the sunset on the summer solstice—a natural coincidence, perhaps, yet significant enough for Paleolithic men to deliberately incorporate it in their art.

Another example of this paradigm shift, which has taken the world of archaeology by storm in recent years, is the discovery of the megalithic temple of Göbekli Tepe in Turkey (see Plate 1).

Predating Stonehenge by over six thousand years, Göbekli Tepe is a site that truly upends the conventional views of the rise of civilization.[4] Not only is Göbekli Tepe an incredible feat of engineering in and of itself, consisting of multiple circles of over two hundred T-shaped pillars (see Plate 2), each

weighing as much as 20 tons, but it is also the oldest known temple, at a staggering eleven thousand years old. Yet Göbekli Tepe was virtually unknown until 1996: a previous 1960 expedition by the University of Chicago had, in fact, dismissed it as a medieval cemetery. It is only thanks to the perseverance of the late German archaeologist Klaus Schmidt that we now know more about it.

Göbekli Tepe proves that our ancestors were capable of creating complex megalithic architecture thousands of years before what archaeologists believed possible, and they could do so on a scale and level of complexity that would not be seen again for another six thousand years. What is more, a project like Göbekli Tepe would have certainly required hundreds of workers, under the direction of a sophisticated priestly or shamanic elite. *Just how ancient and how advanced was this elite?*

The true paradox of Göbekli Tepe is that the earliest layers are also the largest and most sophisticated.[5] New rings were continually added on top of the older ones, becoming, however, increasingly smaller and cruder. To quote author Charles C. Mann, it is "as if the people at Göbekli Tepe got steadily worse at temple building," until suddenly, about 8200 BCE, all construction ceased. "Göbekli Tepe was all fall and no rise."[6]

If Göbekli Tepe was the work of an elite, where did these people come from, and where did they go? Perhaps it is no chance that, although no trace of agriculture or plant domestication has been found at Göbekli Tepe, another site located less than 80 kilometers (50 miles) away called Nevali Çori has provided the earliest evidence of wheat domestication, from 7200 BCE.[7]

Göbekli Tepe is certainly at the forefront of an archaeological revolution that is shattering many of our most widely held beliefs regarding the origins of civilization and the evolution of early human societies. And it is not alone.

Another megalithic complex, this one in Southeast Asia, threatens to push back the beginnings of monumental stone architecture even further, to 24,000 BCE. Gunung Padang, located in Indonesia's West Java province, is a massive pyramid standing over 100 meters (328 feet) high and covering an area of 25 hectares. According to Danny Hilman Natawidjaja, the geologist in charge of the site's excavations, the pyramid is actually five different structures, each built on top of the other over several thousands of years. The uppermost layer, which consists of thousands of prismatic blocks of basalt,

has been recently dated to 5200 BCE—*a full two thousand years older than Stonehenge*. Yet the oldest layers may be as many as twenty-six thousand years old, including a possible chamber located 25 meters (82 feet) below the pyramid.[8]

The conventional dating of other well-known monuments, such as the Pyramids and Sphinx of Giza, has similarly been challenged in recent years. When, in the early 1990s, renowned geologist Robert Schoch first publicized his views that the great Sphinx of Giza had suffered thousands of years of water erosion well before its supposed date of construction in 2500 BCE, he started a debate that threatened to undermine the very foundations of the discipline of Egyptology.[*1]

According to Schoch, the erosion marks visible on the body of the Sphinx can only have been the result of intense rain erosion that occurred at a time when North Africa was not yet a desert, between 9000 and 3000 BCE.[9] Furthermore, evidence shows that the head of the Sphinx was most certainly recarved during Old Kingdom times (2649–2150 BCE) and that it may have been originally that of a lion, as proven by its apparent disproportion with the rest of the body and the absence from it of significant signs of water erosion.

If Schoch's hypothesis is correct, the history of the Giza plateau could be rewritten. In fact, not only the Great Sphinx but also portions of the pyramids' lower stone courses show similar erosion patterns.[10] We may now look with less skepticism at the claims of those researchers who have similarly argued in favor of a much greater antiquity for such mysterious monuments as the Osireion of Abydos or the ancient city of Tiwanaku.

More puzzling still is the evidence of ancient high technology, including stone vitrification, high-speed drilling, and machining, that is also found in these same sites.

How then could an entire society, clearly very advanced in the arts of civilization, vanish altogether from the historical and archaeological record? Maybe, to use the words of author Graham Hancock, we truly are "a species with amnesia."[11] So much of the evidence of ancient advanced civilizations is now slowly beginning to emerge from beyond the veil of history. It will be one of the great scientific endeavors of our age to map the true extent of the vast ruin within which we all live—the legacy of our seemingly superhuman ancestors. This book wishes to be but a small contribution in that direction.

THE ISLAND OF CREATION

Ancient traditions from around the world tell a very consistent story of a lost world that was destroyed and of how a mysterious company of gods traveled the lengths of the known world in the aftermath of a global cataclysm to restart civilization.

The next chapters will follow in the footsteps of these survivors across five continents and thousands of years, tracing their attempts at resurrecting the lost world of the gods.

Three Thousand Pages of Texts

The temple of Edfu, located on the western bank of the River Nile on the site of a mythical battle between the gods Horus and Seth, is possibly the most complete and best preserved of all the ancient Egyptian temples (see Plate 3). Although the present construction only dates to the Ptolemaic period (second century BCE), its foundations are likely predynastic.[*2] The inscriptions on the walls of the temple form the largest body of epigraphical texts to have survived from antiquity. Published by French Egyptologist Emile Chassinat (1868–1948), they occupy over three thousand pages of text in fifteen volumes. Unfortunately, they also remain largely untranslated.[†3]

In 1969, the British Egyptologist Eve Reymond published a partial translation of a portion of the inscriptions that have since become known as the Edfu Building Texts. These seem to have formed part of a group of religious writings dealing with the mythical origins of the temple, said to be "a copy of writings which Thoth made according to the words of the Sages of Mehweret."[12]

Island of the Primeval Ones

The first record contains the description of the place where creation began and "the earliest mansions of the gods were founded." This place was not Egypt, but an island known by the name of "Island of Trampling" or "Island of the Egg." It was on this island that the first "creators of the Earth," beings with mysterious supernatural powers and older than the gods themselves, were believed to have first manifested themselves in a somehow insubstantial

form.[13] Little is known of the original situation of the island, except that it was "covered in reeds" (a significant feature, as we will see, and also present in Mesoamerican mythologies). Allusion is made to the "setting up of an enclosure" and to the "digging-out of a channel . . . which contained water of a special sort."[14] We also learn that the original creators underwent a metamorphosis on the island, after which they took physical form through a process described as the "embodiment" or the "entering into a body" of a "divine power."[15]

"All of Its Divine Inhabitants Perished"

After an unknown period of time, the next record describes an attack on the island conducted by an enemy described as a "snake," as a consequence of which "the island was destroyed and all of its divine inhabitants perished." We have here, writes Reymond, "the clear picture of a disaster" that caused "the feet of the Creator to be pierced" and "the ground of the island to split." A time of darkness followed, during which the first generation of gods remained "concealed underneath the field of reeds."[16]

The Gods Sailed

Once the light shone again on the primeval world, the reeds were the only thing to be seen on the surface of the waters. It was then that a new company of gods called Shebtiw emerged from a place on the island called the "Underworld of the Soul." As a consequence of the uttering of sacred spells, the primeval waters receded and the first dry land emerged. The snake was overthrown, and the former battlefield became the site selected by the gods for the creation of their new domains. These were circular in shape, having the appearance of a circle divided into four quadrants.[17]

From another fragment, we learn that the Shebtiw gods, after having re-created the sacred domains, "left the Island." According to Reymond, "They were believed to have sailed to another part of the primeval world, in which they created Heracleopolis (a city in Upper Egypt)." Allusion is made to the foundation of new sacred domains in various parts of the primeval world, each being "nothing more than the re-creation of a vanished sacred place."[18]

A MONUMENT TO THE END OF TIMES

Eight thousand miles away, the same story is found repeated among the hieroglyphs and bas-reliefs of the Mexican Pyramid of the Feathered Serpent in Xochicalco (see Plate 4).

The pyramid occupies the artificially leveled summit of a hill and was built between the years 700 and 1100 CE. Unique among all Mesoamerican pyramids, it has a facing of massive interlocking blocks of basalt, all covered in exquisite bas-relief carvings. A continuous, undulating serpent motif covers three of its four faces over a length of nearly 60 meters (196 feet), variously entwined with glyphs and other mythological images.

The main panel, which is repeated a total of ten times along the length of the façade, depicts a seated figure on a raft, quite possibly a personification of the civilizing god Quetzalcoatl, fleeing what appears to be a flaming temple on an island identified by the glyph “9-Eye of reptile” as the homeland of the god himself.[19] The coils of the serpent, seemingly wrapping and engulfing the island, give the impression of giant waves about to hit the shore. The marine symbolism is further accentuated by the presence of various kinds of seashells, also frequently associated with Quetzalcoatl as the incarnation of Ehecatl, the god of wind. According to the interpretation given by astronomers Victor Clube and Bill Napier in their book *The Cosmic Serpent*, the serpent is itself a symbol used among ancient cultures to indicate comets.[20]

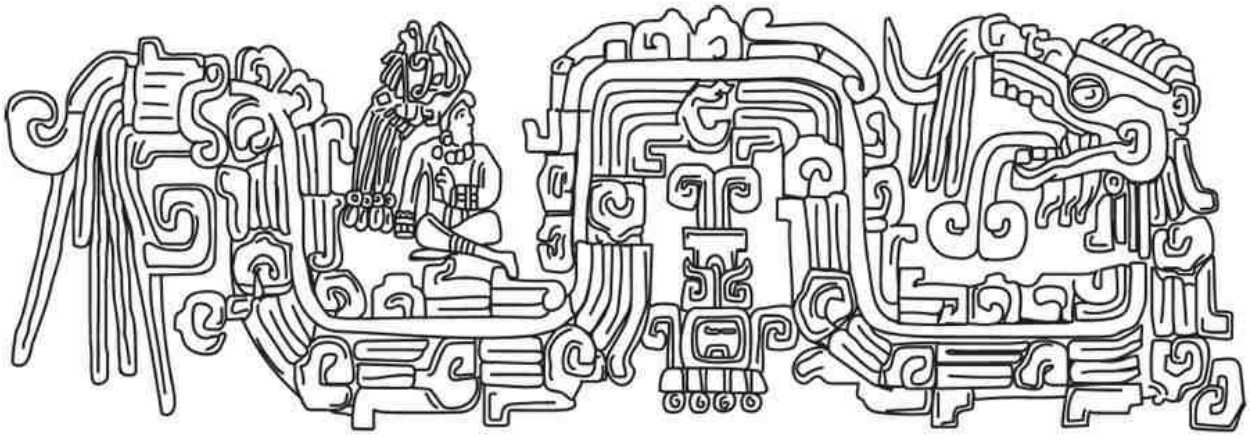

Figure 1.1. The destruction of the primeval island and the departure of Quetzalcoatl. Bas-relief from the Pyramid of the

Feathered Serpent (east side), Xochicalco, Mexico.

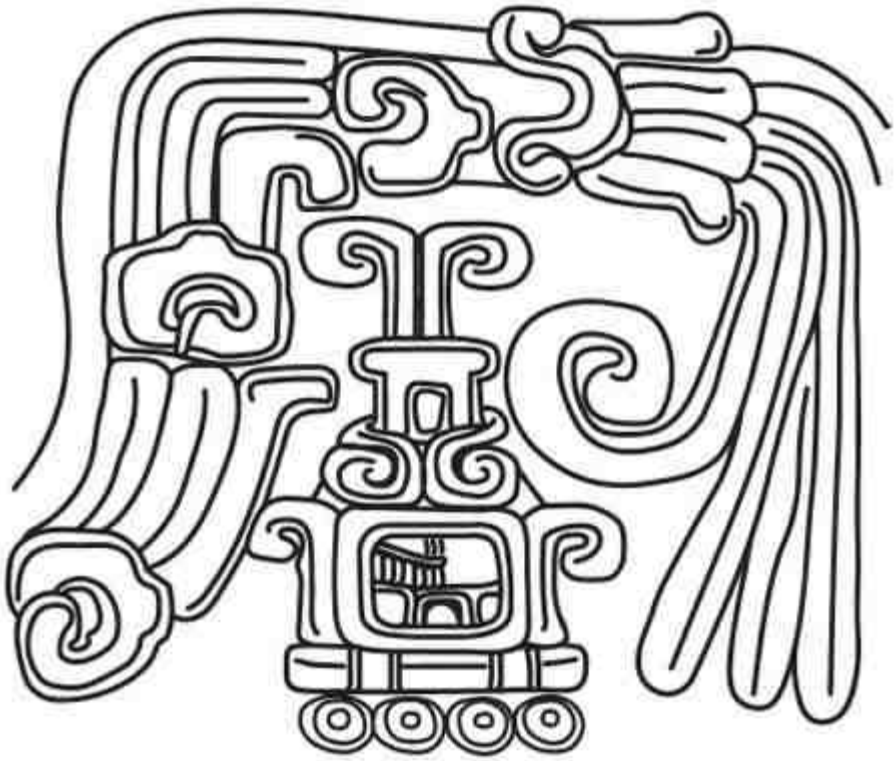

Figure 1.2. Detail of the glyph “9-Eye of Reptile,” representing the primeval Island of the Winds and associated with the homeland of the god Quetzalcoatl. Basrelief from the Pyramid of the Feathered Serpent (south side), Xochicalco, Mexico.

Another curious image shows a typical “sky-bearer,” similar to the Greek god Atlas, associated with a text of difficult interpretation that seems, however, to allude to a recalibration or adjustment of the calendar.[21] Could it be that the same cataclysm depicted on the lower frieze was what made such an adjustment necessary by affecting the Earth’s own axis of rotation?

The same symbolism is found again repeated on a nearby stela depicting the legend of the suns, according to which the god Quetzalcoatl sacrificed himself to allow the sun to be born again after a previous world was drowned in a rain of fire and water.[22]

The frieze that runs along the second story of the pyramid shows a further total of twenty-two seated figures, believed to portray ancient

priestastronomers. Each one of them is associated with a specific place-name, rather curiously depicted (as at Edfu) as a circle divided into four quarters. The series quite possibly contained a list of cities believed to have been founded by the gods after their arrival on the shores of Mexico in the train of the god Quetzalcoatl.

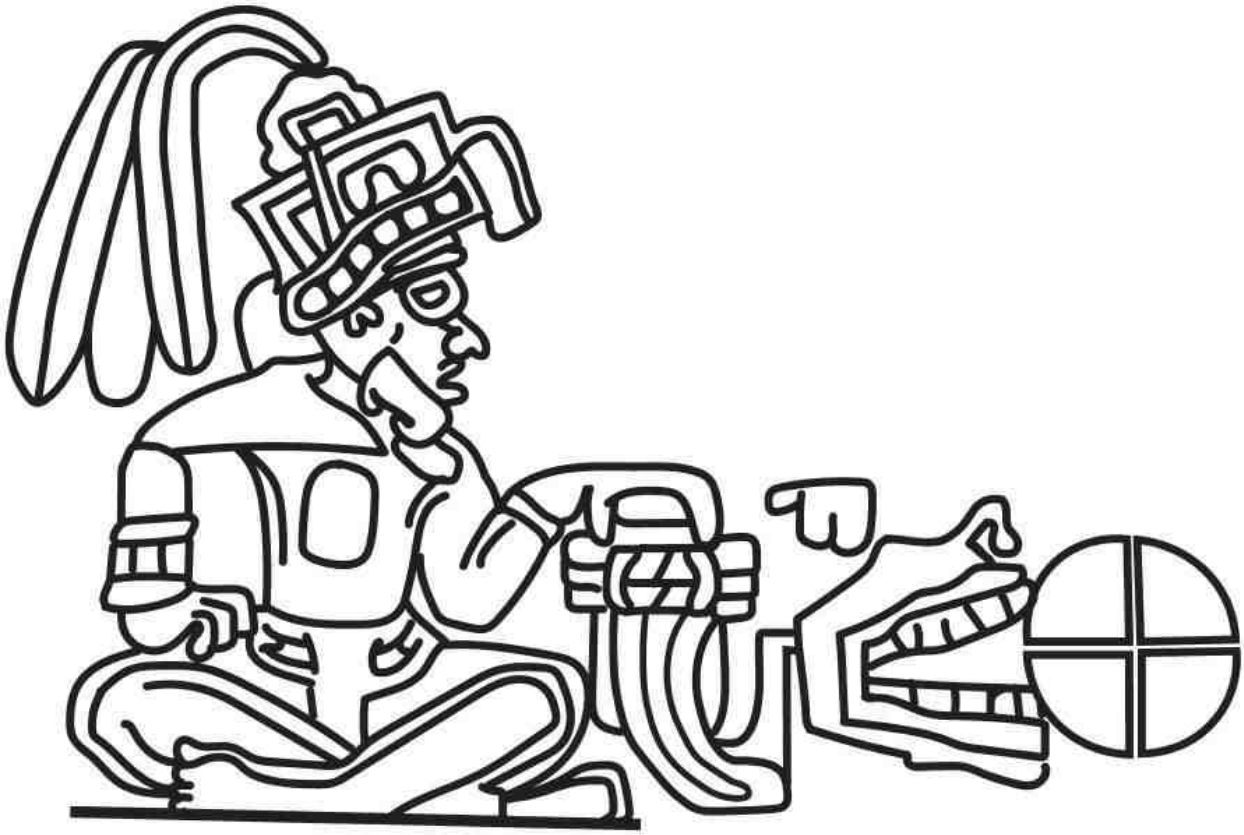

Figure 1.3. One of the twenty-two seated “Lords of Time.” Each Lord of Time is wearing a headdress with the sign of the year indicating his rank as an astronomer-priest. Each city is indicated by a circle divided into four quadrants. Bas-relief from the Pyramid of the Feathered Serpent. Xochicalco, Mexico.

The ancient Mexicans attributed the invention of the calendar and of agriculture, together with all kinds of artistic and scientific achievements, to Quetzalcoatl, the civilizing god and wise priest-king of Tollan. One of the names of Quetzalcoatl was Ce Acatl, meaning “One Reed,” and the name of his great city of Tollan also seemingly signified the “place of reeds.” Could this be yet another name for the island of creation, the same island depicted

on the pyramid of Xochicalco and described in the Edfu Building Texts? And could the Mexican Tollan then have been but a re-creation of this lost land?

PLATO'S ATLANTIS

If this sounds like a familiar story, it is because it is almost word for word the one that Plato tells of the lost island of Atlantis. Indeed, if we believe the great philosopher's words, this story was originally handed down to his great-grandfather Solon by the priests of the temple of Sais in Egypt.

Plato's account begins with the effects of recurring cataclysms caused by "a deviation of the bodies moving in the heavens around the Earth," after which survivors "have to begin all over again like children, and know nothing of what happened in ancient times."[23] One such cataclysm, writes Plato, occurred nine thousand years before the time of Solon, or in 9600 BCE.[24]

Atlantis was then a "mighty power," occupying a great island "larger than Libya and Asia put together" and "situated in front of the straits which are called the Pillars of Heracles."[25] It might have been a volcanic island in the Atlantic Ocean, perhaps the same "Island of Flames" described as the homeland of the god Osiris in the West in the Egyptian *Book of the Dead*. Its name cannot be satisfactorily traced back to any of the Old World languages, but the prefix *atl-* means "water" in the Nahua language spoken by the Aztecs, whose mythical island homeland was also called Aztlan and may further be related to Atala, the "White Island" of the Hindu Vedas.

Like the Island of Trampling of the Edfu texts, Atlantis was crossed by canals and ditches; its capital city had a circular shape and was home to a great and advanced seafaring civilization. Plato also speaks of "violent earthquakes and floods," as a consequence of which "the island of Atlantis . . . disappeared in the depths of the Sea."[26]

A Long, Dark Age

Plato's most famous Atlantis dialogue, the *Critias*, has unfortunately survived incomplete, but it is from another one of his dialogues, *The Laws*, that we learn that after the fall of Atlantis a long dark age followed, in which all arts and sciences were lost.

An account of what may have happened after the fall of Atlantis can be found in both the Edfu records and the hieroglyphs of the pyramid of Xochicalco, which tell the story of how groups of survivors were responsible for restarting civilization in the aftermath of the global cataclysm.

It is only from the analysis of their legacy, both spiritual and monumental, that a picture of this long-lost and forgotten civilization could perhaps be put back together.

2

ATLANTIS AND THE CYCLES OF TIME

In reconstructing humanity's most remote past, the archives of many mystery schools and esoteric traditions open avenues of knowledge rarely explored in the scientific literature on the subject of ancient lost civilizations and the prehistory of the human race. Even more so, if we think that some of these groups might not have been simple bystanders in the process that ensured the survival and transmission of sacred knowledge over the several thousands of years during which the archaeological record remains largely silent.

From the multiple fragments scattered across world mythologies, the clear picture emerges of a high civilization of remote antiquity that perished in a cataclysm of planetary proportions, perhaps ten thousand years ago or more. The survivors from this civilization, who would later colonize the rest of the ancient world, brought with them the principles of a very peculiar and advanced science, reputed to be of divine origin.

In *The Laws,* Plato speaks of the ancient canons of art and science that had been preserved in the temples of Egypt for nearly ten thousand years, a time frame that brings us back to that of the final destruction and submersion of Atlantis.

As we will see in chapter 3, this is not an isolated tradition, for several

ancient chronologies from both sides of the Atlantic point to this very fatidic period, the eleventh millennium BCE, as the time of the Great Deluge and the end of the last golden age. A vast body of evidence from the fields of geology, zoology, anthropology, botany, and astronomy also points to a cataclysmic extinction around the same time when Plato situates the submersion of Atlantis—what is known today as the Younger Dryas boundary event.

ESOTERIC TRADITION AND THE AGES OF MAN

Throughout the world, we find traditions describing the fall of man from his original divine state: *a fallen god who remembers heaven.* This is a view radically different from that of modern evolutionary theory, which is based on the idea of a constant progression of humanity in the arts of civilization since the appearance of the first anatomically modern humans in East Africa about two hundred thousand years ago.

According to the esoteric tradition, on the opposite side of the spectrum, the present humanity is the result of the bodily incarnation on the physical plane of higher spiritual entities. This fact, which we might call the *incarnation of a divine principle into man,* is also at the basis of many of the world's revealed religions, including Christianity, Islam, Judaism, and Buddhism. It was also at the basis of the great neo-Atlantean tradition that expressed itself in the ancient Egyptian theory of the soul and that later permeated Greek philosophy and Hermetism.

Gnosticism and Theosophy further developed this intuition into a whole system and hierarchy of spiritual and physical planes, mirroring the descent of the human soul into matter.

Of Gold, Silver, and Bronze

This whole system is perhaps most famously exemplified by the Greek myth of the ages of man. In his poem *Works and Days,* composed around 700 BCE, the poet Hesiod described five ages, starting with the Golden Age and ending with the present Iron Age.

First of all was the race of the Golden Age, a godly and divine race under the rule of Kronos (Saturn). This was the race of the immortals, said to continue their existence on the Earth as pure spirits.[1]

The Golden Age was followed by the Silver Age, under the rule of Zeus. The men of the Silver Age, however, could not keep from sinning and wronging one another. For this reason, they angered the gods and were destroyed, becoming the spirits of the underworld.

Next was the race of the Bronze Age, hardened and tough, as war was their purpose and passion. This race, too, perished—"destroyed by their own hands . . . and left no name: terrible though they were, Black Death seized them, and they left the bright light of the Sun."[2]

Then came the race of the Age of Heroes, "nobler and more righteous, a god-like race of hero-men, who are called demi-gods, the race before our own, throughout the boundless earth." After death, Hesiod says, they passed on to the Islands of the Blessed, "along the shores of the deep-swirling Ocean . . . and Kronos rules over them."[3]

Finally came the race of the dreadful Iron Age, that of present humanity, ruled by Zeus, which "never rests from labor and sorrow," living an existence of toil and misery.

The Yuga Cycles

It was probably through India that this tradition reached the Greeks in the first millennium BCE. In the Hindu Yuga system, the names of the ages are given as Satya (or Krita) Yuga, Treta Yuga, Dwapara Yuga, and Kali Yuga. The Age of Heroes is omitted. Humanity follows the same path of spiritual degradation as it goes through each one of the four ages, except that Hinduism sets them into cyclical repetition, with a complete cycle forming a manvantara, or "Great Year." Each age represents therefore another cosmic "season" within the greater cycle of the manvantara.

According to the Laws of Manu (second century BCE), the duration of each Yuga follows a 4:3:2:1 proportion, with 12,000 years to a complete cycle. We thus have 4,800 years in the Satya Yuga, 3,600 years in the Treta, 2,400 in the Dwapara, and 1,200 years in the Kali Yuga.

The *Bhagavata Purana*, however, offers some very different figures.[*4] In

considering a “divine year,” in which one human year is equal to one day of the gods, the *Bhagavata Purana* affirms that “one year of the demi-gods is equal to 360 years of the human beings. The duration of the Satya-Yuga is therefore 4,800 × 360, or 1,728,000 years. The duration of the Treta-Yuga is 3,600 × 360, or 1,296,000 years. The duration of the Dwapara-Yuga is 2,400 × 360, or 864,000 years.”[4]

Thus, it follows that the duration of the Kali Yuga must be 432,000 years, or 1,200 × 360 years, with 4,320,000 years to the entire cycle. One will immediately realize that these are all significant precessional numbers, for 12,960 is half the full precessional cycle of 25,920 years, and 4,320 years is its sixth part, each number being moreover perfectly divisible by 60.

It is generally believed that the astronomical phenomenon known as the precession of the equinoxes was first discovered by the Greek astronomer Hipparchus of Nicaea (ca. 190–120 BCE), who observed that the rising and setting positions of the sun at the equinoxes were slowly moving (precessing) with respect to the background of the “fixed stars” forming the Zodiac (see Plate 5 depicting Aion, the Roman god of eternal time, holding the celestial sphere decorated with zodiacal signs, an early representation of cyclical time). Modern calculations show the rate of precession to be approximately one degree in 72 years, or 25,920 years to a full cycle. The most commonly accepted explanation of this phenomenon resides in a slight wobble of the Earth’s axis of rotation that causes its orientation (currently 23°26'11") to shift slightly, from a minimum of 22°2'33" to a maximum of 24°30'16" with respect to the Earth’s orbital plan (Ecliptic), over a period of approximately 26,000 years.

The detection of this slow and subtle movement would have required centuries, if not thousands of years, of accurate astronomical observations of the relative positions of the sun and stars, something that modern science maintains would have been well beyond the capabilities of prehistoric societies. Yet the available evidence from traditional cosmologies shows that the effects of precession were already known and understood thousands of years before the time of Hipparchus, with an accuracy that matches modern estimates of the average rate of precession.

One need only know the starting point of the present cycle to derive a complete chronology: According to Puranic sources, the Kali Yuga began at midnight, between February 17 and 18, 3102 BCE. Depending on the

duration chosen for the different Yugas, the beginning of the present cycle may thus be situated in 13,902 BCE (according to the Laws of Manu) or in 3,891,102 BCE (according to the *Bhagavata Purana*).

Why the discrepancy? As hermetic scholar Joscelyn Godwin aptly points out in his book *Atlantis and the Cycles of Time*, the essential number is really 4,320. Such is this number that, when multiplied by 15, it yields the real duration of the manvantara, the zeros being simply put there to mislead.[5] With 64,800 years to the full cycle, this gives the following duration for the four Yugas: Krita Yuga: 25,920 years; Treta Yuga: 19,440 years; Dwapara Yuga: 12,960 years; and Kali Yuga: 6,480 years.

TABLE 2.1.
YUGA CYCLE DURATIONS ACCORDING TO TRADITIONAL COSMOLOGIES

	Yuga Cycle Duration (Years)		
Age	**Laws of Manu**	***Bhagavata Purana***	**Revised Yuga Cycles*[5]**
Satya (Krita) Yuga	4,800	1,728,000	25,920
Treta Yuga	3,600	1,296,000	19,440
Dwapara Yuga	2,400	864,000	12,960
Kali Yuga	1,200	432,000	6,480
Manvantara	12,000	4,320,000	64,800

No matter the dates chosen, the core idea behind these chronologies is that there are cycles in history that have the power to affect the order of life and civilization on our planet. Each cycle begins with a divine spiritual influence taking bodily form, which then becomes progressively corrupted as a consequence of its fall into matter, until the beginning of a new cycle.

When the Gods Walked among Men

The message implicit in the Yuga cycles and other esoteric chronologies is

strongly reminiscent of the spiritual degradation of Plato's Atlanteans.

"For many generations," wrote Plato in *Critias,* "as long as the divine nature lasted in them, they were obedient to the laws, and well affectioned towards the Gods, whose seed they were." It was only "when the divine portion began to fade away, and became diluted too often and too much with the mortal admixture" that "the human nature got the upper hand."[6] It was thus the loss of their true spiritual origins as a consequence of their descent into matter (the "mortal admixture") that brought about the final doom and destruction of the Atlantean golden race, a tale all too similar to the one the Bible tells of the "fall" of the rebellious angels.

Cosmic Seasons

Where this all seems to come together is in the teachings of Hindu mystic and Vedic scholar Sri Yukteswar (1855–1936), which have gained new traction since the publication of Walter Cruttenden's 2005 book *Lost Star of Myth and Time.*

At the core of Sri Yukteswar's system is the familiar division of time into four Yugas, set in the traditional proportion 4:3:2:1. Their duration is the same as established in the Laws of Manu, except that the twelve thousand years are *human* years in place of *divine* years. Upon reaching its lowest point at the end of the Kali Yuga, however, the cycle does not immediately revert to a new golden age but has first to go through the sequence of all the preceding Yugas. The combined sum of the descending and ascending cycles gives a total of twenty-four thousand years, which Sri Yukteswar considers to be the true period of the precession of the equinoxes.

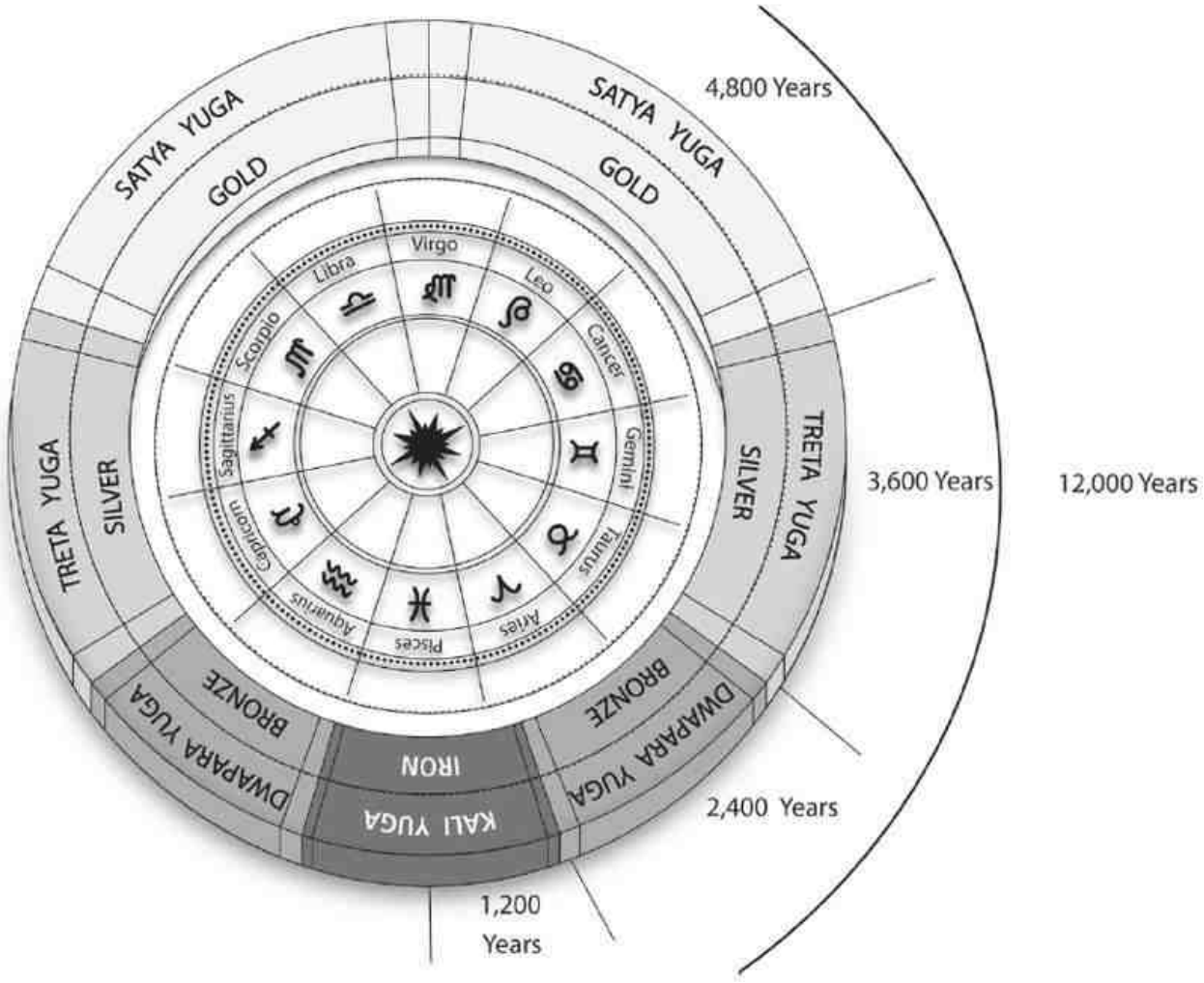

Figure 2.1. Diagram of the four Yugas, or World Ages, according to traditional Hindu cosmology, after Sri Yukteswar. The four world ages follow each other in cyclical repetition. In the descending portion of the cycle, the Satya Yuga (Golden Age) is followed by Treta Yuga (Silver Age), Dwapara Yuga (Bronze Age), and Kali Yuga (Iron Age). Then a new cycle of 12,000 years starts again, this time with the ages in reverse order: from Kali Yuga (Iron Age) to Satya Yuga (Golden Age).

Perhaps the most stunning revelation is that the cause of the cycles, as well as of equinoctial precession, resides in the sun's own motion around a nearby star, possibly Sirius. "Just as day and night bring periods of light and darkness . . . and the year brings changing seasons due to the Earth's motion around the sun," writes Cruttenden, "so too did the Great Year bring its

changes based on astronomical motion."[7] As the sun revolves around a common center of gravity with its dual star companion, Cruttenden continues, the Earth is dragged through this motion "into the magnetic or electromagnetic (EM) field of another star, similar to but different from the EM spectrum of our own Sun, causing subtle changes in human consciousness over long sweeps of time."[8] The heavens thus become an active participant in the evolution of consciousness.

Notwithstanding Cruttenden's scientific terminology, the gods and demigods are just a few steps away from the concept of an electromagnetic consciousness that is "awakened" under the effects of cosmic radiation over extremely long periods of time and then wanes in a similarly cyclical and predictable fashion toward the opposite end of the cycle.

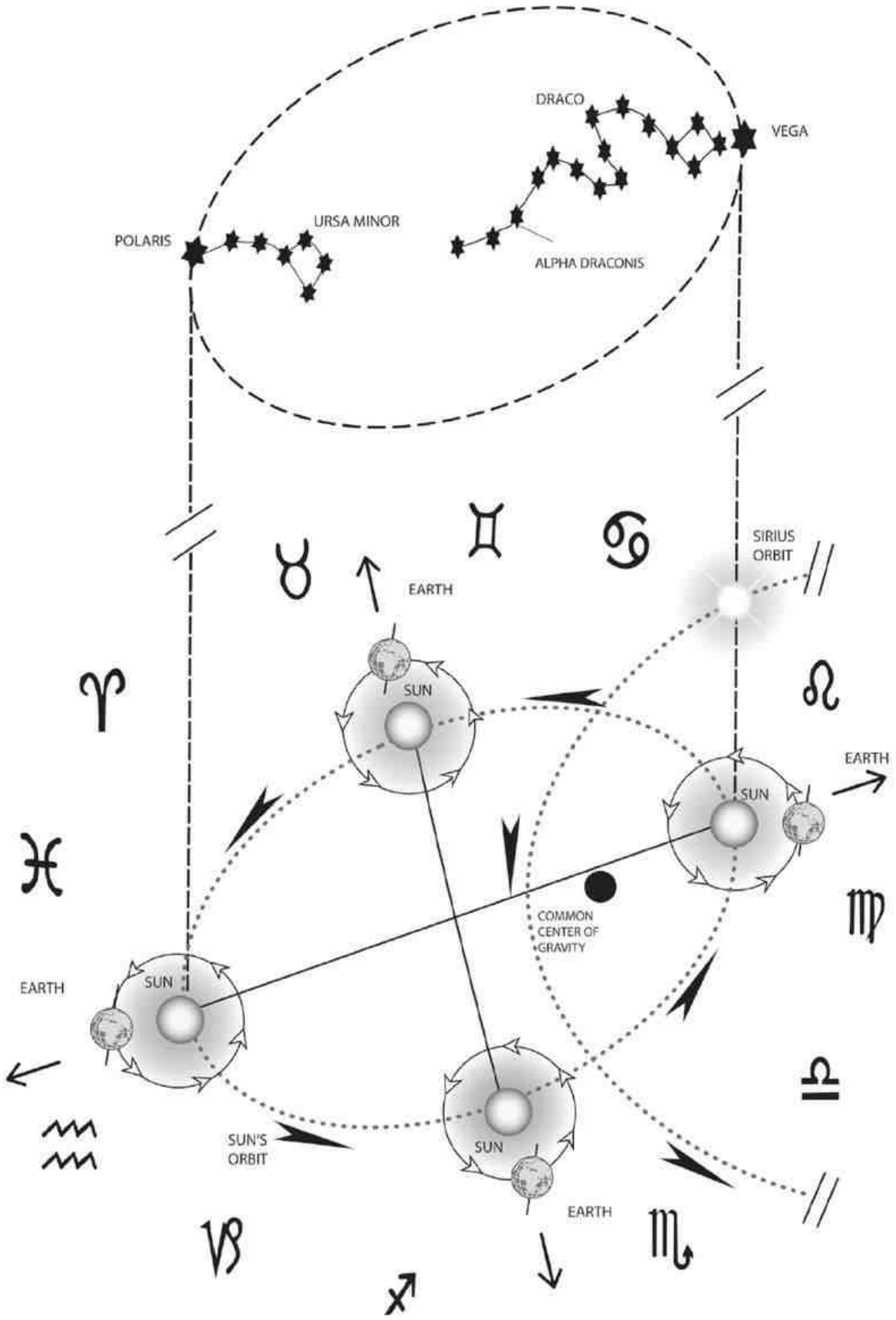
DRACO
VEGA
POLARIS
URSA MINOR
ALPHA DRACONIS
SIRIUS
ORBIT
EARTH
SUN
EARTH
SUN
EARTH
COMMON
CENTER OF
GRAVITY
SUN
SUN'S
ORBIT
SUN
EARTH

Figure 2.2. (opposite) Model of the precession of the equinoxes according to the binary star hypothesis (after Cruttenden, 2005, and Gordon, 2013). Rather than being caused by a wobble in the Earth's own axis of rotation, precession is the result of the sun's orbit around a common center of gravity with another star, quite possibly Sirius. At different points along its orbit, the solar system (and thus the Earth) will face a different astronomical direction, seemingly pointing toward a different constellation at the equinox, and the ecliptic North Pole will point toward a different Pole Star. Currently, the sun rises between the constellations of Pisces and Aquarius at the time of the spring equinox, with Polaris (Alpha Ursae Minoris) lying in a direct line with the Earth's rotational axis "above" the North Pole. Twelve thousand years ago Vega, in the constellation of Draco, would have been the Pole Star, with the sun rising between the constellations of Virgo and Leo during the spring equinox.

Teachings of Theosophy

No dissertation of esoteric chronologies would be complete without a reference to Theosophy and its system of *root races* and *sub-races.*

It goes certainly beyond the purpose of this book to trace but a very general outline of the complex Theosophical doctrine of evolutionary cycles that each span countless ages and millions of years, as recounted in several hundred pages of the books of the Russian-born mystic Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (1831–1891). Theosophy originated as a movement in the late nineteenth century under Blavatsky's influence and drew heavily from various esoteric branches of Hinduism and Buddhism. The intention of Theosophy was never to simplify the picture of our past, but rather to convey its full complexity. Races appear and vanish, continents rise from the bottom of the ocean and sink beneath the waves; survivors migrate from one continent to another, mating with other human and nonhuman races, their hybrid progeny becoming the seed of a new root race or perishing in one of the geological upheavals that inevitably accompany the cataclysmic rise and fall of the ages.

At its core, Theosophy believes in a form of *externally guided* evolution, in which higher beings had to intervene to guide humanity's physical and spiritual development.

Theosophy distinguishes among seven root races of humanity, each one (except the first two), divided into sub-races, also seven in number. The present humanity belongs to the fifth, or Aryan, root race, after which there will be two more before the end of the present cycle.

A History of the Early Races

Very little can be said of the first two root races, the Polarian and the Hyperborean, for they were entirely immaterial, formed of etheric matter, and did not possess as such a history of their own. They inhabited an imperishable sacred land, which tradition equates with the North Pole— not the physical one, however, but the true occult Mount Meru. For this reason, all connections of the first two races with physical geography are necessarily tenuous.

The third root race, the Lemurian, was the first to take on physical bodies, although of a still primitive nature. It inhabited a vast southern continent called Lemuria, which extended over a large part of what is now the Indian and Atlantic Oceans.

The Atlantean root race, which followed the Lemurian, was the first truly human and terrestrial race. This race inhabited a much larger continent than just the Atlantis of Plato, stretching across much of the northern and southern Atlantic Ocean. According to Blavatsky, the race of Plato's Atlantis was little more than a postscript—a mere "degenerate descendant" of the great Atlantean race of nearly 850,000 years earlier.

The history of the fifth root race, that of present humanity, the Aryan, is of little interest to us here. Suffice to say that it was believed to have evolved from the few survivors of the Atlantean root race who had taken refuge in the region of the present Gobi Desert at the time of one of the great terrestrial cataclysms that rent the continent of Atlantis.

Traditionalist Chronologies

Of all those who followed in the footsteps of the early theosophists, the

French philosopher René Guenón (1886–1951) was perhaps more than any others responsible for anchoring Blavatsky's theory of races and cycles into a plausible historical time frame. Guenón is considered one of the greatest representatives of the Traditionalist School, a group of mostly twentieth-century thinkers who believed in the existence of a perennial wisdom (Philosophia Perennis) of very remote antiquity at the origin of all the world's great religions and mystical traditions.

Guenón had the intuition that the Yuga cycles were related to the duration of the Great Year, taken as the period of the precession of the equinoxes. He then took the duration of half a precessional cycle (12,960 years) as the duration of each root race, obtaining a total of 90,720 years for the entire cycle of seven root races. Following the same sevenfold division, he then calculated that a little over 1,850 years was the duration of each sub-race.

Based on these assumptions, he could then situate precisely in time the first incarnation of highly spiritual beings on the earthly plane, the original "White" race, in 62,500 BCE. This was followed in 49,618 BCE by the "Yellow" race, inhabiting a now lost Pacific Continent. The Lemurian or "Black" race lasted from 36,735 BCE to 23,835 BCE, followed by the "Red" Atlantean race. The race of the present humanity, the fifth, is a mixture of the White, Red, and Black races and is also fast approaching its end. Two more human races will follow, each a mixture of the previous ones, until the end of the present cycle in the year 27,677 CE.[9]

As a true traditionalist, Guenón believed that humanity was not the result of a process of evolution, but of a separate origin that could be better called a *descent.*

Another traditionalist, Julius Evola (1898–1974), also operating within the boundaries of Guenón's shorter manvantara, placed the Lemurians as the first root race, followed by the Hyperboreans (the second) and the Atlanteans (the third).

After Guenón's death, Gaston Georgel (1899–1988) would be the one to continue his work on the chronology of the four Yugas. Georgel's manvantara began in 62,801 BCE, with the first three ages lasting, respectively, 25,920 years (Krita Yuga), 19,440 years (Treta Yuga), and 12,960 years (Dwapara Yuga). This brings us to the year 4,481 BCE, which marks the beginning of the Kali Yuga. This was set to last 6,480 years, ending in the year 1999 of our era. In Georgel's model, the Platonic year of

12,960 years, the precession of the equinoxes, and the four Yugas all seem to fit back into place in the traditional 4:3:2:1 proportion, with the entire manvantara covering a period of 64,800 years. His proposed sequence of the first five root races is as follows:

- **Primordial race (Hyperborean):** Location, Hyperborea; dates, 62,801 BCE to 49,841 BCE
- **Yellow race (Lemurian):** Location, Lemuria; dates: 49,841 BCE to 36,881 BCE
- **Black race:** Location, Gondwana; dates, 36,881 BCE to 23,921 BCE
- **Atlantean (Red?) race:** Location, Atlantis; dates, 23,921 BCE to 10,961 BCE
- **White race (Nordic):** Location, Europe; dates, 10,961 BCE to 1999 CE (or 2030 CE).

The first and second races belonged to the Golden Age, while the third existed fully during the Silver Age. In contrast, the Atlantean race spanned part of the Silver and the Bronze Ages. Georgel situates, like Guenón, the time of the last Atlantean cataclysm in 10,961 BCE.

With Georgel, we also conclude this brief dissertation on esoteric chronologies. For all their confusion of races and cycles spanning tens of thousands of years, these chronologies all appear deeply rooted in ancient wisdom. At their core is the belief in a spiritual origin of humanity and a cyclical view of history ruled by great cosmic cycles, at the beginning of which higher spiritual beings incarnate on Earth in human form.

THE CHRONOLOGIES OF GODS AND KINGS

By the time Christianity had taken over as the state religion of the western Roman Empire in the fourth and fifth centuries of our era, the traditional view of *cyclical time* had been largely replaced with a worldview entirely based on *linear time,* which admitted only one revelation and a single divine incarnation. For the Christians (and the Jews before them), time had a

beginning and an end. It was a single, uniform narrative directed toward salvation.

Ancient traditional chronologies, based on a concept of cyclical time and a succession of world ages, were thus replaced with the much shorter biblical chronology. It was based on the authority of the Bible that Archbishop of Ireland James Ussher famously stated in 1650 that "the world was created at nightfall preceding Sunday, October 3, 4004 BC."[10]

Within this shorter chronology, which effectively limited the totality of human experience on Earth to the span of the last Kali Yuga, there was clearly no space for the idea of an ancient world ruled by the gods. All of this was quickly relegated to the realms of fantasy, at least when it was not openly persecuted as a dangerous heresy by the church.

Thousands of years before Ussher, the Brahmins of India calculated the duration of a *day of Brahma* as 4.32 billion years, comprising 1,000 Maha Yugas, or Kalpas, of 4,320,000 years each. The ancient Maya similarly employed a unit of time of 23,040,000,000 days, or over 63 million years, called an *Alautun.* Monument 6 (Stela F) of Quiriguá, in Guatemala, reports a date of 1 *Ahau*, 13 *Yazkin,* calculated as 91,683,930 *tuns* (over 90 million years), while a date of over 400 million years is found on Monument 4 (Stela D) from the same site.[11] "These are actual computations," observed the dean of Maya studies, Sir Eric Thompson, "stating correctly day and month positions."[12]

Back in the Mediterranean world, the famous Roman statesman Cicero (103–46 BCE) declared that "the Chaldeans had preserved upon monuments observations of the stars extending back 470,000 years."[13] Berossus, the great Babylonian historian who flourished in the third century BCE, mentioned dynasties of kings dating back 432,000 years, a period quoted by Diodorus Siculus as 473,000 years.[14] Similarly, Pliny the Elder (23–79 AD), relying on the authority of Epigenes, asserted that the Babylonians had kept astronomical observations on clay tablets covering a period of 720,000 years.[15] Ancient Egyptian records tell of primeval dynasties of gods and demigods ruling for tens of thousands of years or, according to Herodotus, for one and a half precessional cycles—a period of thirty-nine thousand years.[16]

Such concepts of a superior antiquity, so clearly contradicting biblical

chronology, were anathema to the church. Eusebius of Caesarea (260–340 CE), one of the early Christian fathers, would therefore go on to expose in his *Chronicon* the "lies" of Berossus and Manetho, "concerning their dynasties of gods and kings that never existed."[17] We should forgive the criticism of these early Christian authors and thank them instead for having preserved in their critiques so many valuable fragments of ancient king lists and chronologies. Known for centuries only through the indirect testimony of largely hostile Christian writers, very few of these king lists have survived in their original form. All that we can rely on today are but fragments of what must have once been a complete and extremely accurate chronology.

KINGS BEFORE THE FLOOD

For centuries, until the discovery of the cuneiform records of Mesopotamia, the only available sources for early Babylonian chronologies were the few scattered fragments of the works of Berossus that had been passed down to us through the filter of the early Christian fathers, particularly Eusebius of Caesarea and Georgius Syncellus (ca. 800 CE).

Berossus's King List

Berossus listed ten antediluvian kings or dynasties, reigning for a combined 432,000 years (a figure all but identical to the duration of the Kali Yuga according to the *Bhagavata Purana*). His postdiluvian king list contained then another eighty-six kings "from Xisuthros and the flood until the capture of Babylon by the Medes," reigning for 33,091 years. As the dates of the reign of Sennecherib (705–681 BCE), the last king in Berossus's list, can be firmly established, we can calculate the date of the Flood as having occurred in the year 35,335 BCE. Also, it is possible to reconstruct the following tentative chronology for the post-Flood period:

TABLE 2.2.
THE POSTDILUVIAN PORTION OF BEROSSUS'S KING LIST (AFTER EUSEBIUS OF CAESAREA, *CHRONICON*)

Dynasties after the Flood	Number	Years	Start	End

	of Kings	of Reign	of Reign	of Reign
“From Xisuthros and the flood until the capture of Babylon by the Medes”	86	33,091	35,335 BCE	2244 BCE
Kings of the Medes	8	224	2244 BCE	2020 BCE
Kings	11	28	2020 BCE	1992 BCE
Kings of the Chaldeans	49	458	1992 BCE	1534 BCE
Kings of the Arabs	9	245	1534 BCE	1289 BCE
Semiramis (Queen)*6	1	42	1289 BCE	1247 BCE
Kings	45	526	1247 BCE	721 BCE
Phulus (King)*6	1	16	721 BCE	705 BCE
Sennecherib (King)*6	1	24	705 BCE	681 BCE
Total Postdiluvian Period	**211**	**34,654**	**35,335 BCE**	**681 BCE**

Cuneiform Records

The account of Berossus would have been considered entirely fabulous had it not been for the fortuitous discovery of several fragments of texts of a very similar nature among the ruins of ancient Mesopotamia. Between 1898 and 1900, the German-American archaeologist Hermann Hilprecht (1859–1925) excavated over seventeen thousand cuneiform tablets dating to the period between 2500 and 1950 BCE from the ancient temple library of Nippur.

One tablet in particular, now known as Nippur Tablet B, contained what

appeared to be a fragment from a longer king list. The surviving portion of the text mentioned eleven dynasties with their respective years of reign, after which some tantalizing totals were given: “Eleven royal cities. Their total: 134 Kings. Total: 28,876 + N years, N months, N days.”[18]

In 1921 a similar document, known as the Weld-Blundell Prism (WB-444), surfaced from the excavations of Larsa, a city in ancient Sumer. The antediluvian section of this king list comprised eight rulers or dynasties, encompassing 241,200 years, whereas the postdiluvian section contained the names and years of reign of 137 rulers, over a period of 32,631 years.

In the following years, over eighteen more copies of what has since become known as the Sumerian King List have been found, most of them dating to the time of the Isin dynasty (ca. 2017–1794 BCE), but none as complete and detailed as the Weld-Blundell Prism.

Stephen Langdon, the Oxford professor who attended the first publication of the list in 1923, wrote:

> If we accept the actual figures of the prism the first King after the Flood ruled 34,685 BC. The first ruler of Erech began to reign 10,175 BC. . . . The second kingdom of Kish began in 7,832 If we allow for the omission of the last two kings before the Flood by accepting the figures on WB-62 and add 64,800 years for these 2 Kings, the Prism, WB-444 places the first ruler of mankind 340,685 BC. WB-62 would yield 490,685 for the beginning of Mankind, and Berossus’ figure would be 466,685 BC.

Discussing the significance of these very large numbers, Langdon further observed, “A Chinese source of the 8th Century CE assigns 432,000 years to the age of the 13 kings of heaven and the 11 kings of the earth, [whereas] the Indian period Kali Yuga corresponds exactly to the figure of Berossus.”[19]

Most of the surviving king lists from Mesopotamia include ten kings or rulers before the Flood, whose regnal lengths are given in *sars,* a numerical unit equivalent to 3,600 years. The WB-444 list begins with a ritualistic formula describing how “Kingship descended from Heaven” at the time of Alulim (or Alorus), the first antediluvian king. In total, the list mentions two kings of Eridu reigning for 64,800 years, three kings of Bad-tibira for

108,000 years, one king of Larak for 28,800 years, one king of Sippar for 21,000 years, and one king of Shuruppak for 18,600 years. Their names are recorded as Alulim, Alalngar, Enmen-gal-ana, Dumuzid “the divine Shepherd,” En-men-lu-ana, En-sipad-zid-ana, En-men-dur-ana and Ubara-Tutu. Two names are missing from the list, those of Arad-Gin and Ziusuddu (Xisuthros), to whom other sources attribute 28,800 and 36,000 years of reign, respectively.

TABLE 2.3.
ANTEDILUVIAN KING LIST ACCORDING TO BEROSSUS AND W

Berossus (after Eusebius)			Sumerian (WB-444)		
Kings before the Flood	**Cities**	**Years of Reign**	**Kings before the Flood**	**Cities**	**Yea Re**
Alorus	Babylon	36,000	Alulim	Eridu	28
Alaparus	?	10,800	Alalngar	Eridu	36
Amelon	Pantibiblon	46,800	En-men-gal-ana	Bad-tibira	28
Ammenon	Pantibiblon	432,000			
Megalorus	Pantibiblon	64,800	Dumuzid, “the divine Shepherd”	Bad-tibira	36
Daonus, “the Shepherd”	Pantibiblon	36,000	En-men-lu-ana	Bad-tibira	43
Euedorachus	Pantibiblon	64,800	En-sipad-zid-ana	Larak	28
Amempsinus	Larancha	36,000	En-men-dur-ana	Sippar	21
Otiares	Larancha	28,800	Ubara-Tutu	Shuruppak	18
Xisuthros	Larancha	64,800			

Total:10 Kings	**Total:3 Cities**	**Total: 432,000Years**	**Total:8 (10?) Kings**	**Total:5 Cities**	**Tota 241, Yeai**

The postdiluvian section begins again with the same ritualistic formula, according to which "after the Flood had swept over, the Kingship descended from Heaven," and then continues with the list of 137 kings after the Flood, covering 32,631 years.

TABLE 2.4.
THE POSTDILUVIAN PORTION OF THE SUMERIAN KING LIST (AFTER WB-444)

Dynasties after the Flood	Number of Kings	Years of Reign	Average Reign Lengths (in Years)	Start of Reign	End of Reign
I Dynasty of Kish[*7]	23	24,510	1,066	34,361 BCE	9851 BCE
I Dynasty of Uruk	12	2,310	193	9851 BCE	7541 BCE
I Dynasty of Ur	4	177	44	7541 BCE	7364 BCE
Dynasty of Awan	3	356	119	7364 BCE	7008 BCE
II Dynasty of Kish	8	3,195	399	7008 BCE	3813 BCE
Dynasty of Amazi	1	360	360	3813 BCE	3453 BCE
II Dynasty of Uruk	3	420	140	3453 BCE	3033 BCE
II Dynasty	4	108	27	3033 BCE	2925 BCE

of Ur					
Dynasty of Adab	1	90	90	2925 BCE	2835 BCE
Dynasty of Mari	6	136	23	2835 BCE	2699 BCE
III Dynasty of Kish	1	100	100	2699 BCE	2599 BCE
Dynasty of Akshak	6	93	16	2599 BCE	2506 BCE
IV Dynasty of Kish	7	97	14	2506 BCE	2409 BCE
III Dynasty of Uruk	1	25	25	2409 BCE	2384 BCE
Dynasty of Akkad	11	181	16	2384 BCE	2203 BCE
IV Dynasty of Uruk	5	30	6	2203 BCE	2173 BCE
Gutian Rule	21	125	6	2173 BCE	2048 BCE
V Dynasty of Uruk	1	7	7	2048 BCE	2041 BCE
III Dynasty of Ur	5	108	22	2041 BCE	1933 BCE
Dynasty of Isin	14	203	15	1933 BCE	1730 BCE
Total:20 Dynasties*8	**Total:137 Kings**	**Total: 32,631Years**	**Average Length of Reigns Overall: 238 Years**	**Dynasties begin 34,361 BCE**	**Dynasties end 1730 BCE**

The duration attributed to the reigns of each individual king appears certainly exaggerated, even when compared with the extremely long life spans of several hundreds of years that the Bible assigns to the antediluvian patriarchs. Although a significant reduction in the duration of each king's reign occurs after the Flood, regnal lengths in excess of one thousand years still appear in the postdiluvian section for at least five of the twenty-three kings that compose the first dynasty of Kish.

Dwight Young of Brandeis University has since suggested a mathematical approach to these numbers, pointing out that most of these appear to have arisen simply as multiples of 60. It is possible that different numerical conventions involving the use of the sexagesimal (having 60 as the base) or decimal systems of numeration may have resulted in these seemingly exaggerated numbers. If this were indeed the case, all antediluvian reign lengths should be reduced by a factor of 60 or 6. The 432,000 years attributed by Berossus to the antediluvian period would thus be reduced to 72,000 or 7,200 years.[20]

The list was also apparently produced under the theory that there was only one king at any given time in all of Babylon and that the different dynasties must therefore have strictly followed each other. Based on epigraphical evidence, Thorkild Jacobsen, in his 1939 book *The Sumerian King List*, however, shows that many dynasties listed as consecutive were in fact contemporary.

Mysterious Sources

This leaves us with the question of what mysterious originals the earliest surviving redactions of the Sumerian king lists were based on.

All the available evidence points to these originals having been based on extremely accurate historical records. For instance, Nippur Tablet B goes as far as mentioning the exact number of years, months, and days of reign attributed to each ruler or dynasty. As an example, we read in the Nippur list that over the time covered by the four dynasties of Kish, "39 Kings ruled for 14,409 + N years, 3 months and 3½ days."[21]

This kind of precision assumes an extremely accurate timekeeping system, such as was hardly in existence in the third millennium BCE, when the Nippur king list was allegedly composed.

The plot thickens if one considers that, very often, the same scribes who were responsible for the copies gave out clear hints to the fact that they could not understand many of the signs and figures contained in these documents. This is attested to by the frequent use of expressions such as, “I do not understand” to explain gaps in the text. “So many misreadings and errors,” wrote Jacobsen in his seminal study of the Sumerian king list, “would hardly have developed had not a long period of tradition separated the copies from the original.”[22]

The great care that was put into the preservation of these ancient king lists (as testified by the over eighteen versions of the Sumerian king list that survive in various museums around the world) and the minimal variations that characterize the various copies should be held as positive proof that we are here confronted with much more than a fictional account compiled by deluded priests to glorify a local ruler or dynasty.

At the same time, the surviving king lists are certainly the result of the compilation of several different sources, some historical, some others of a clearly religious or mythological character, wherein numerology and astrology almost certainly played a role in defining the sequence and years of reign attributed to each king or dynasty.

Notwithstanding all their internal inconsistencies, gaps in information, and incredibly long durations of reign, the Sumerian king lists draw a remarkably coherent picture of our past as it was conceived in ancient Sumer at the dawn of recorded history. This view appears, moreover, to be in substantial agreement with that of many traditional and esoteric chronologies. There is the belief in a clear division of history into pre-Flood and post-Flood periods; a sequence of world ages related to astronomical cycles; and the consecutive rule of divine, semidivine, and finally purely human dynasties. Also, there is the idea of a spiritual “fall” or descent, reflected in the progressively decreasing regnal lengths attributed to the kings of the antediluvian and postdiluvian periods.

GOD, DEMIGODS, AND SPIRITS OF THE DEAD

The Sumerian king list does not stand in isolation, and in fact, the mystery

deepens when we find that similar records of dynasties and kings stretching back well beyond the boundaries of recorded history have also been preserved in Egypt and other parts of the ancient world.

Predynastic Rulers

The Palermo Stone is the earliest surviving fragment of an ancient Egyptian king list. Dating to the Fifth Dynasty (ca. 2494–2345 BCE), it is at least five hundred years older than the earliest known redactions of the Sumerian king list. Only a small fragment of the complete list survives, containing the names of nine predynastic kings of Lower Egypt. Had the list been complete, it might have contained as many as 120 names with their respective regnal lengths.[23]

Fortunately, more fragments of the same king list were preserved in the Turin Papyrus and in the few surviving excerpts of Manetho's *Aegyptiaca* contained in the works of Flavius Josephus, Sextus Africanus, and the Christian fathers Eusebius of Caesarea and George Syncellus.

The Royal Canon

The Turin King List, also known as the Royal Canon, is a hieratic papyrus dating to the reign of Ramesses II (1279–1213 BCE). The papyrus was allegedly found intact in 1820 in the ancient Egyptian city of Thebes, but it was so damaged on its journey to a museum in Italy that it disintegrated into hundreds of small fragments, to the point that a complete reconstruction may never be possible.[*9]

The papyrus contains a list of rulers and dynasties, accompanied by their respective regnal lengths, and is considered the most complete and extensive of all ancient Egyptian king lists.

Before listing the various mortal dynasties, the papyrus lists various dynasties of gods and demigods. Unfortunately, this portion of the text is significantly damaged. Only the last few lines survive, which contain the following totals: "Venerable Shemsu-Hor, 13,420 years; reigns up to the Shemsu-Hor, 23,200 years; (Total), 36,620; King Menes."[24] The extant information has been recreated in Table 2.5.

Since the reign of King Menes, the first pharaoh of the First Dynasty, is

conventionally dated to 3100–3050 BCE, this means that the beginnings of Egyptian history may go back almost forty thousand years.

Eduard Meyer, whose translation of the Royal Canon remains the most accurate to date, lists nine prehistoric dynasties, among which we find the "Venerables of Memphis," the "Venerables of the North," and finally, the Shemsu-Hor, usually translated as the "Companions" or "Followers of Horus." These, too, were preceded by a dynasty of gods that included a total of ten divine names.[25] This is the same number as that of the antediluvian kings in the Sumerian king list.

TABLE 2.5.
THE TURIN KING LIST

Dynasty	Number of Kings	Years of Reign	Start of Reign	End of Reign
Gods	10	(?)	(?)	39,720 BCE
Reigns up to the Shemsu-Hor	(?)	23,200	39,720 BCE	16,520 BCE
(?)	(?)	1,000	39,720 BCE	38,720 BCE
20 Kings of [. . .] (?)	20	1,110	38,720 BCE	37,610 BCE
10 Kings of [. . .] (?)	10	(?)	37,610 BCE	(?)
(?)	(?)	330	(?)	(?)
10 Kings of [. . .] (?)	10	1,000	(?)	(?)
19 Kings of Memphis ("Venerables of Memphis")	19, 11	(?)	(?)	(?)
19 Kings of the North ("Venerables of the North")	19	2,100	(?)	(?)
(?)	(?)	(?)	(?)	(?)

“Venerable Shemsu-Hor”	(?)	13,420	16,520 BCE	ca. 3100 BCE
Total Predynastic Period	**88 + (?)**	**36,620**	**Begin 39,720 BCE**	**Endca. 3100 BCE**
I Dynasty—King Menes	1	50	ca. 3100 BCE	ca. 3050 BCE

Manetho’s King List

The Egyptian priest Manetho, who lived in the third century BCE, was the author of a history of Egypt in three books, which enjoyed broad circulation in Greek and Roman times.

Fragments of his works appeared in the books of Josephus, such as *Contra Apionem* (Against Apion, dated 94 CE) and were later quoted by the early Christian fathers Sextus Africanus (ca. 160–240 CE), Saint Jerome (ca. 347–420 CE), and Eusebius of Caesarea (ca. 260–340 CE). Most of the works of these Christian authors, which were of a critical nature, were lost in antiquity and only survive through more or less complete copies and translations, including the *Chronographia* of Malalas (491–578 CE), the *Chronicle* of Syncellus (810 CE), and a collection of texts of uncertain authorship and provenance (probably from the fifth or sixth centuries CE) known as *Excerpta Latina barbari* [Fragments in bad Latin]. To complicate matters further, none of these versions appear to agree, neither on the order and sequence of the different dynasties nor on their respective durations.

TABLE 2.6.
THE MANETHO KING LIST (FROM EUSEBIUS)

Dynasty	Number of Kings	Years of Reign	Start of Reign	End of Reign
Gods	9	13,900	28,025 BCE	14,125 BCE
Demigods	(?)	1,255	14,125 BCE	12,870 BCE

“Other Kings”	(?)	1,817	12,870 BCE	11,053 BCE
“30 Kings from Memphis”	30	1,790	11,053 BCE	9263 BCE
“10 Kings from Thinis”	10	350	9263 BCE	8913 BCE
“Shades and Spirits of the Dead”	(?)	5,813	8913 BCE	ca. 3100 BCE
Total Predynastic Period	**49 + (?)**	**24,925**	**Begin 28,025 BCE**	**End ca. 3100 BCE**
I Dynasty—King Menes	1	50	ca. 3100 BCE	ca. 3050 BCE

According to Syncellus, the original list of Manetho contained thirty royal dynasties preceded by the reign of the gods, comprising twentyfive Sothic cycles of 1,461 years, or 36,525 years.[26] This number appears to be very close to the one given in the Turin Papyrus for the total of the prehistoric dynasties. In his *Ecloga chronographica*, Syncellus also makes the interesting observation that the king lists of Manetho and Berossus began in one and the same year.[27]

Eusebius, on the other hand, grants 13,900 years to the reign of the gods, 1,255 years to the demigods, and a total of 9,770 years to the dynasties between the demigods and King Menes, for a total of 24,925 years, which is nearly 12,000 years shorter than the figure of Syncellus and Berossus.

Independent Confirmation

Various classical authors provide independent confirmation of the sources of Manetho. Diodorus of Sicily (first century BCE) wrote that, according to ancient chronicles, gods and heroes ruled Egypt for eighteen thousand years. Thereafter, the land was governed by mortal kings for fifteen thousand years, thus bringing the total time span of history and prehistory to thirty-eight thousand years.[28]

Similarly, Herodotus (484–425 BCE) mentions 340 generations of kings and high priests, adding that “during the long succession of centuries, on four separate occasions, the sun moved from his wanted course, twice raising where he now sets, and twice setting where he now rises.”[29]

According to Egyptologist R. A. Schwaller de Lubicz, this would imply that “the vernal point [the rising of the sun] had been twice located in the same constellation of Aries, and that it also passed twice in the opposing constellation of Libra. This would grant the duration of one and a half precessional cycles to the entire historic and prehistoric periods, or approximately 39,000 years.”[30]

This again appears to substantially agree with the extant fragments of Manetho, the testimony of Diodorus, and the Turin King List.

De Lubicz further identified the Shemsu-Hor, or the Followers of Horus of the Turin King List with Atlantean survivors who brought with them “a knowledge of ‘divine origin’ and unified the country with it.”[31] This seems to find confirmation in the works of Syncellus, who similarly wrote that the chronology of Manetho, in comprising the “immense period” of 36,625 years, “dealt first with the Aeritae [Aeliteans or Atlanteans?], next with the Maestraei and thirdly with the Egyptians.”[32] The same tradition of the migration into Egypt of a foreign and highly civilized race is also expressed in the Edfu Building Texts.

It is indeed possible that the “Company of the Falcon,” to which the Edfu Building Texts allude, and the Shemsu-Hor of the Turin King List refer to the same group of semidivine beings.

While no mention of a flood is explicitly made in any of the surviving Egyptian king lists, it is abundantly clear from the abrupt transitions between one epoch and divine dynasty to the next that underlying these accounts was the belief in multiple periods of creation ending in cataclysm.

As we will see in the next chapter, the idea of subsequent creations or world ages is not unique to Egypt and Babylon, for it is found equally expressed in the Mexican Legend of the Suns.

CHILDREN OF THE FIFTH SUN

For the Aztecs and the ancient Nahua people of Mexico, the world had already gone through four previous ages, each associated with a different "sun."

The best known account of the Legend of the Suns dates to 1558, shortly after the conquest of Mexico, and is contained in the voluminous *Codex Chimalpopoca:*

- **First Sun ("Age of Earth"):** The people of this age were giants who were devoured by jaguars or, according to other versions, perished in a famine.
- **Second Sun ("Age of Fire" or "Age of Rain"):** At this time, the god of fire, Xiuhteuctli, caused a rain of fire that exterminated humanity. All men perished, except for a man and a woman who saved themselves in a cave.

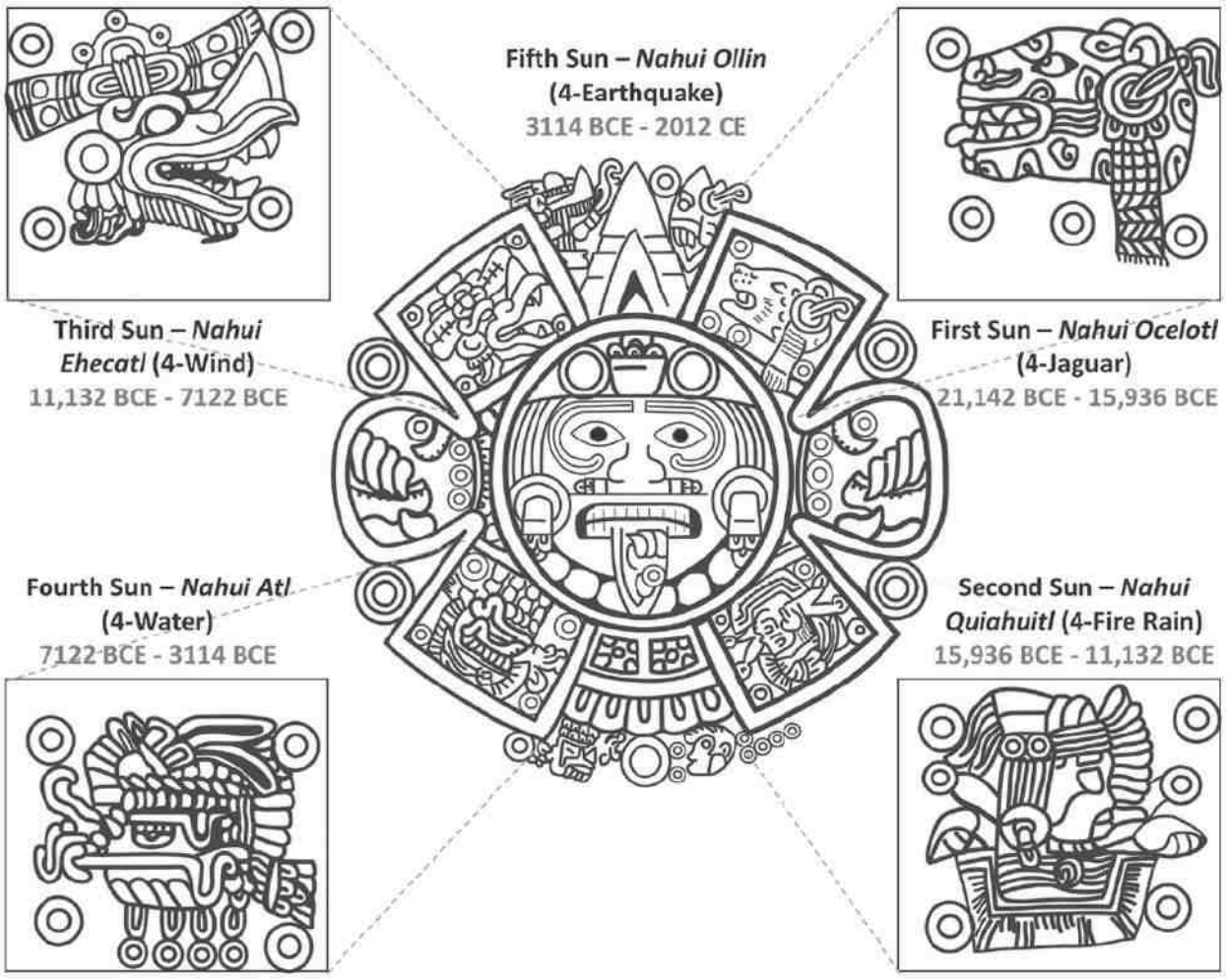
Fifth Sun – *Nahui Ollin* (4-Earthquake)
3114 BCE - 2012 CE
Third Sun – *Nahui Ehecatl* (4-Wind)
11,132 BCE - 7122 BCE
First Sun – *Nahui Ocelotl* (4-Jaguar)
21,142 BCE - 15,936 BCE
Fourth Sun – *Nahui Atl* (4-Water)
7122 BCE - 3114 BCE
Second Sun – *Nahui Quiahuitl* (4-Fire Rain)
15,936 BCE - 11,132 BCE

Figure 2.3. Representation of the five cosmological suns or world ages according to Aztec mythology. From the Stone of the Sun, National Museum of Anthropology, Mexico City.

- **Third Sun ("Age of Wind"):** The men of this age were carried away by a hurricane, while some were transformed into monkeys.
- **Fourth Sun ("Age of Water"):** A great inundation, which began on the day Nahui-Atl (4-Water) destroyed mankind. All people were transformed into fishes, except for a man and a woman who saved themselves in the trunk of a giant ahuehuete tree.

The present world age or sun, the fifth, will end in an earthquake on the day Nahui-Ollin (4-Earthquake). Unlike the previous suns, however, the Aztecs believed that the present sun could last indefinitely so long as the gods received a constant tribute of blood.

To further convey the idea of the spiritual degradation of mankind through the ages, the sacred book of the Quiché Maya affirms that the men of the early races "were endowed with intelligence . . . and succeeded in knowing all that there is in the world When they looked, instantly

they saw all that there is around them, and they contemplated in turn the arc of heaven and the round face of the Earth."[33]

It was only later, with the coming of subsequent generations, that this divine knowledge was lost as the gods brought blindness into the eyes of men, by saying, "Are they not by nature creatures of our making? Must they also be Gods?" "Let their sight reach only to that which is near; let them see only a little of the face of the Earth!"[34]

Another manuscript, known as *Codex Vaticanus 3738* or *Codex Ríos*, provides information on the duration of each sun or world age in the Mesoamerican system, as shown in Table 2.7.[35]

TABLE 2.7.
MESOAMERICAN CHRONOLOGY, FROM THE *CODEX VATICANUS 3738*

World Age (Sun)	Duration	(Actual Dates)

	(Years)	
First Sun (4 Jaguar)	5,206	21,142 BCE–15,936 BCE
Second Sun (4-Rain)	4,804	15,936 BCE–11,132 BCE
Third Sun (4-Wind)	4,010	11,132 BCE–7122 BCE
Fourth Sun (4-Water)	4,008	7122 BCE–3114 BCE
Fifth Sun (4-Earthquake)	5,125	3114 BCE–2012 CE
Total: Five Suns	**Total Years: 23,153**	**Duration: 21,142 BCE–2012 CE**

Again, little more can be said of these numbers, except to remark on the great proximity of the date proposed by Guenón and Georgel for the Atlantean cataclysm (10,961 BCE) to the end of the second world age according to the Mesoamerican Legend of the Suns (11,132 BCE), a date also remarkably close to the beginning of the first human dynasty according to Manetho (11,053 BCE).

THE GENESIS CODE

Similar to the Sumerian king list, the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) lists ten antediluvian patriarchs and nine postdiluvian patriarchs until the time of Abraham. Assuming that Abraham was born in 2123 BCE and counting 292 years in the previous nine generations of postdiluvian patriarchs, this would situate the Flood in 2415 BCE, which is obviously absurd. By then, the Egyptian Old Kingdom was in fact in the middle of its flourishing and the civilizations of Babylon and Sumer were already a thousand years old.

It was while searching for an alternative explanation of these numbers that researcher Alan Alford came to the conclusion that an error must have occurred in the transcription of the biblical text from a now lost Sumerian original that would have expressed numbers according to the sexagesimal system common to ancient Mesopotamia. Use of the correct notation would significantly extend the duration of the postdiluvian period, as shown in Table 2.8.

For some reason, it seems that the compiler of this section of Genesis divided the numbers in the original Sumerian text by a factor of 50, mistakenly assuming that the positional notation was decimal rather than sexagesimal.

Unlike the decimal system, which consists of units rising by a factor of 10 each time, the Sumerian sexagesimal system rises by alternating factors of 6 and 10 as illustrated below for, say, expressing the number 5,000 as 1-2-3-2-0.

Decimal Units	10000	1000	100	10	1
	n/a	5	0	0	0
Sexagesimal Units	3600	600	60	10	1
	1	2	3	2	0

Once the numbers are correctly expressed in the original sexagesimal notation (middle column), one obtains the revised ages contained in the final column. The 292 years from the Flood to the birth of Abraham thus become 8,860 years. If we then add the 2,123 years that separate Abraham from the birth of Christ, we obtain a date for Noah's Flood of 10,983 BCE, which is less than 22 years from the date calculated by Guenón and Georgel for the last Atlantean cataclysm (10,961 BCE).[36]

TABLE 2.8.
REVISED BIBLICAL CHRONOLOGY (GENESIS 11:10–26), AFTER ALFORD, 1996

Biblical Patriarchs	Age at Becoming a Father	Sumerian Original	Revised Ages
Shem, generated Arphaxad	2*10	2-0-0	120
Arphaxad, generated Shelah	35	1-7-5-0	1,070
Shelah, generated	30	1-5-0-0	900

Eber			
Eber, generated Peleg	34	1-7-0-0	1,020
Peleg, generated Reu	30	1-5-0-0	900
Reu, generated Serug	32	1-6-0-0	960
Serug, generated Nacor	30	1-5-0-0	900
Nacor, generated Terah	29	1-4-5-0	890
Terah, generated Abraham	70	3-5-0-0	2,100
9 Patriarchs after the Flood	**292**		**8,860**

It is clear that this flood cannot be the same as the Sumerian or Babylonian flood, which both Berossus and the WB-444 Sumerian King List place closer to 35,000 BCE. These various floods may be better understood as separate boundary events, allegorically marking the transition from one world age to the next. Confirmation of this may be found in the simple observation that the two dates of 35,000 BCE and 11,000 BCE are separated by almost exactly a full precessional cycle.

FRAGMENTS OF FORGOTTEN HISTORY

It is a tragedy that so many of the records of our remote past have been lost. Almost nothing remains of the great annals of the Maya and the Aztec races, burned in inquisitorial zeal by conquistadores and Catholic priests. Vanished forever are also the earliest annals of India and China, as well as the records of the Phoenicians, who claimed an antiquity even greater than that of the Egyptians. The great library of Carthage, said to contain over half a million

books in the Phoenician language, was entirely lost when the Romans took the city and virtually razed it to the ground after a siege that had lasted nearly three years (from 149 to 146 BCE). An even greater loss was inflicted on mankind with the destruction of the Library of Alexandria, first at the hand of Caesar's troops in 48 BCE and then again by the Arabs in 640 CE.

Only fragments remain of the history of the Phoenicians written by Sanchoniathon, who in his three books was said to have collected the "secret writings of the Ammouneis," which he had discovered—according to the testimony of Eusebius—on certain pillars that stood in the Phoenician temples. The few fragments preserved in the works of Eusebius describe the origin of the gods as mortal kings and trace their genealogies back to the Titans Kronos and Atlas.

In a most interesting passage, which was preserved by Eusebius, Kronos was said to have thrown his brother Atlas into a deep cavern in the Earth following the advice of Hermes. The same god, Kronos, was then said to have visited all the regions of the inhabitable world, including "the country to the South . . . Egypt," which he gave "to the god Taautus [Thoth], that it may be his kingdom."[37] Could this be yet another allusion to the arrival of a foreign race into Egypt, perhaps from Atlantis? Such would be suggested by the use by Sanchoniathon of the word Aletae to indicate the Titans of mythology, a term all but identical to the Aelitean (Atlantean?) kings of Manetho.

How much more could we have learned from these works if they had survived intact from antiquity? And yet, all that we are left with are but precious fragments of a lost whole that we may never be able to piece back together.

Similarly lost are the libraries of the Indian kings. It is only thanks to the testimony of the classical authors Pliny and Solinus that we learn of the existence of annals encompassing 153 generations of kings over 6,451 years between the time of Dionysus and Alexander.[38]

The Hindu Puranas are themselves "replete with genealogies of Indian kings stretching far back into prehistory," writes author Ian Lawton, although "very few reign lengths are recorded."[39] Even when they have survived, these reign lengths appear to be entirely fabulous: the *Vishnu Purana,* for instance, in listing over 120 kings in one Vedic dynasty alone, assigns up to 85,000

years to the reign of a single king.

Turning to ancient Persia, we find in Zoroastrianism a “great year” of twelve thousand years, obviously modeled on the Hindu Yuga cycles. From indications contained in the *Bundahishn* concerning the birth of Zoroaster in the year 9000 of our age,[40] it is possible to situate the beginning of the present cycle in 9600 BCE, a time that is all but identical to the one suggested by Plato for the final submersion and disappearance of Atlantis.

Exceptionally long reign lengths are also recorded for some of the Avestan kings, with Yamshed, the fourth king of the world, believed to have reigned for 716 years, 6 months and 13 days.[41]

We owe the few surviving fragments of Chinese king lists to the work of the French missionaries of the eighteenth century, who could study materials that have since become lost or remain untranslated in the West. One of these sources covered a period of 432,000 years, which was divided into two divine dynasties with twenty-four kings.[42] This is, of course, the same number of years as in the Kali Yuga and also in the antediluvian portion of Berossus’s king list.

Other early Chinese documents, known as the *Records of the Grand Historian*, composed in 94 BCE, and the *Bamboo Annals*, include even longer lists of mythical rulers. In these records, we find mention of at least three antediluvian periods, known as the Period of the Earliest Men, the Period of Highest Virtue, and the Period of the Great Ten. Of these, the Period of the Great Ten interestingly echoes the Mesopotamian and Egyptian tradition of ten antediluvian rulers. To these three epochs was attributed the immense duration of nearly three million years.[43]

Even if we were to dismiss these records as exaggerated fantasies, we would still find at their core a remarkably coherent system based on the idea of multiple creations or world ages and the repetition of the same basic cosmological numbers.

3

THE CALENDARS OF ATLANTIS

The fragmentary nature of ancient chronologies requires adopting a comparative approach for reconstructing the time line of the prehistoric period. Few works have attempted to draw the chronological progression of what we may call “Atlantean” civilization. This civilization thrived during the last ice age and collapsed as the result of a chain of cataclysms that culminated in a massive cometary strike about 11,000 years BCE.

In the esoteric tradition, Atlantis represents the civilization of the cycle immediately preceding ours. Its peak coincided with the last golden age, but its influence extended well into the following ages, until the dawn of the Kali Yuga.

Other episodes of high civilization might have preceded it, as suggested by the esoteric tradition, but the reconstruction of all but the vaguest outlines of these remote epochs would be an almost fruitless endeavor. “Certain time barriers exist,” warned Guenón, “beyond which it is extremely difficult to obtain any accurate knowledge,” even by occult means. The last of these barriers, he added, “corresponds to the last great terrestrial cataclysm, that of the disappearance of Atlantis, and it is quite useless to try to go back any further.”[1] A thick veil has been drawn over the mysteries of our past, and it will be the task of the following chapters to lift it, at least in part.

TRADITIONS OF THE KINGS OF ATLANTIS

There seems to be general agreement among ancient and esoteric sources that the total duration of Atlantean civilization spanned an entire cosmic cycle, or a manvantara. Considerable debate, however, exists around the latter duration —whether it is the 64,800 years of Guenón or the 432,000 years of Berossus and the Vedic cosmologies. Two key dates appear to have marked the greater course of Atlantean civilization, corresponding to the first and the final Atlantean cataclysms. In Guenón's chronology, these dates, separated by a full precessional cycle of 25,920 years, are 36,881 BCE and 10,961 BCE. The epoch before 36,881 BCE marked the peak of Atlantean civilization and is also referred to as the antediluvian period in Babylonian records.

The Antediluvian Period

Ancient sources conventionally divide the antediluvian period into ten reigns or dynasties. Ten is also the number of the Atlantean kings, according to Plato. This was the primeval Age of the Gods, ruled by the first divine dynasties in human form.

TABLE 3.1.
CHRONOLOGY OF THE ANTEDILUVIAN PERIOD AND ITS TEN KI MYTHOLOGIES

Sumerian (WB-62)	Sumerian (WB-444)[*11]	Babylonian (Berossus)[*11]	Biblical (Genesis 5)	Egypt (Tur Papyr
Alulim	Alulim	Alorus	Adam	Ptah('
Alalngar	Alalngar	Alaparus	Set	Re
[. . .] kidunnu-	Enmen-gal-ana	Ammenon	Enos	Shu ('

sakinkin				
[. . .] uk? Ku?		Megalorus	Chenan	Geb
Dumuzi-sib	Dumuzid, “the Shephard”	Daonus, “the Shepherd”	Mahalalel	Osiris
Enmen-lu-ana	En-men-lu-ana	Amelon	Iared	Seth
Ensibzianna	En-sipad-zid-ana	Amempsinus	Enoch	Horus
Enmen-dur-ana	En-men-dur-ana	Euedorachus	Methuselah	Thoth
Arad-Gin	Ubara-Tutu	Otiartes	Lamech	Ma’at
Ziusuddu		Xisuthros	Noah	Har
Total: 10 Kings	**Total: 8 (10?) Kings**	**Total: 10 Kings**	**Total: 10 Patriarchs**	**Total: Gods**
456,000 Years	**241,200 + N?Years**	**432,000 Years**	**1,656(165,000?)Years**	**3,626 +N? Years**

Not only is the number 10 highly significant, but enough similarities exist between the names of the ten Atlantean kings as transcribed by Plato in *Critias* and the antediluvian kings of WB-444 and Berossus to suggest a common origin for the two accounts.

Thus, the name of the first Atlantean king, Alulim or Alorus, is virtually identical to Adam, of which Atlas appears to be a variation. Diaprepres, the name of the last Atlantean king, similarly results from a corruption of the name of the Babylonian Flood hero Xisuthros.

Two Floods

We can be certain that as early as the third millennium BCE a well-established tradition existed of ten antediluvian kings or dynasties. A total of 456,000 or 432,000 years of reign was assigned to these dynasties by Babylonian sources. A cataclysmic event seems to have occurred around 36,881 BCE, the date calculated by Guenón for the end of the Satya Yuga (Golden Age) and the beginning of the Treta Yuga (Silver Age). This is further confirmed by various Mesopotamian accounts, which give a date closer to 35,335 BCE for the first flood.

There should be no confusion between this first flood, which we will refer to as the "Fall," and the last Atlantean cataclysm, which occurred much more recently, in 10,961 BCE, and culminated with the final submersion of Atlantis in 9600 BCE. The belief in only one flood—whereas it is clear from ancient mythologies that there were many—has been the source of countless misunderstandings and errors in the interpretation of ancient chronologies. To avoid any confusion, we will hereafter refer to the time before the Fall as the first Atlantean period.

A COMPARATIVE CHRONOLOGY OF THE ATLANTEAN PERIOD

The post-Fall period of Atlantean civilization began around 36,000 or 35,000 BCE and ended in 10,961 BCE. This is what we will refer to as the second Atlantean period. This period spanned the entire length of the Treta Yuga (Silver Age) and part of the Dwapara Yuga (Bronze Age), according to Guenón's chronology. After the cataclysm of 10,961 BCE, it is no longer possible to speak of a single Atlantean civilization. We will therefore use the term neo-Atlantean in referring to the various breakaway empires that emerged during the Dwapara Yuga and the Kali Yuga from the dissolution of the original Atlantean Empire.

Four key dates seem to recur with the greatest frequency in ancient chronologies. The first of these dates is that of the Fall, around 35,000 BCE. This was followed by another significant episode in 17,441 BCE, which may have coincided with the foundation of the Second Atlantean Empire. Finally, we find the memory of a double cataclysm at the end of the Atlantean period. This consisted of two separate events; one in 10,961 BCE (according to

Guenón's chronology) and a second in 9600 BCE. We will only note that these two dates remarkably coincide with the now widely accepted boundary dates for the beginning and abrupt termination of the Younger Dryas cold spell that marked the end of the last ice age

With minimal variations, these key episodes appear to have been recorded in all the major ancient chronologies from Egypt and Mesopotamia and are further corroborated by separate Hindu, Persian, and Mesoamerican sources.

For the first time, it then becomes possible to reconstruct a tentative sequence of the development of Atlantean civilization based on the testimony of ancient chronologies and king lists. This is summarized in Table 3.2. The sources are grouped by region and then chronologically by age of the source.

TABLE 3.2.
ATLANTEAN CHRONOLOGY WITH KEY DATES CONSIDERED FOR EACH EVENT

Ancient Source	The Fall (First Atlantean Cataclysm)	Second Atlantean Empire	Second Atlantean Cataclysm (Beginning of Younger Dryas)	Final Submersio of Atlantis (End of Younger Dryas)
Sumerian (WB-444)	First Flood 34,361 BCE			Fall of First Dynasty of Kish 9,851 BCE
Sumerian (Nippur Tablet B)	First Flood 30,606 BCE			Fall of First Dynasty of Kish 9,710 BCE
Babylonian (Berossus)	First Flood 35,335 BCE		Second Flood (Planets	

			Align in Capricorn) 11,266 BCE	
Biblical Genesis (After Alford)			Flood of Noah 10,983 BCE	
Egyptian (Turin Papyrus)	“Reigns prior to the Shemsu-Hor” 39,720 BCE	Reign of the Shemsu-Hor 16,520 BCE		
Egyptian (Manetho)		Reign of the Demigods 14,125 BCE	First Egyptian Dynasty (30 Kings of Memphis) 11,053 BCE	“Shades an Spirits of th Dead”8,913 BCE
Egyptian (Sothic Cycles)			Beginning of Calendar 11,542 BCE	
Coptic (Papyrus of Abu Hormeis)				Deluge (Regulus in Cancer) 9,220 BCE
Assyrian (Lunar Calendar)			Beginning of Calendar 11,542 BCE	

Persian/Zoroastrian (*Bundahishn*)				Beginning c Current World Age 9,600 BCE
Hindu—Yuga Cycles (after Guenón)	End of Satya Yuga (Beginning of Treta Yuga) 36,881 BCE	End of Treta Yuga (Beginning of Dwapara Yuga) 17,441 BCE	Atlantean Cataclysm 10,961 BCE	
Greek(Plato, *Critias*)				Final Sinkin of Atlantis 9.600 BCE
Mesoamerican (*Codex Vaticanus 3738*)		Second Sun,"4-Rain" 15,936 BCE	Third Sun, "4-Wind" 11,132 BCE	

DATING THE ATLANTEAN CATACLYSM

Plato's dramatic account of the destruction of Atlantis "in a single day and night of misfortune" also provides the most often cited indication of the date of the final destruction and submersion of Atlantis in 9600 BCE, or nine thousand years before the time of Solon.

In Mesopotamian chronologies, this time coincides with the fall of the First Dynasty of Kish, the first after the Flood, and also the one with the longest duration—24,510 years (according to WB-444). Most Sumerian sources situate the downfall of this powerful dynasty between 9851 and 9710 BCE, which is only about one hundred years before the supposed date of Plato's Atlantean cataclysm. Furthermore, according to Zoroastrian beliefs, the present world age also began in 9600 BCE.

In the chronology of Manetho, the year 11,053 BCE marks the beginning of the first Egyptian dynasty of thirty kings from Memphis. The dynasties prior to this one, including the reign of the gods and demigods, were believed to have ruled in a foreign country, from which they received the name of Auliteans (Atlanteans?).

Manetho's date of 11,053 BCE for the foundation of the first Egyptian dynasty is also very close to the date proposed by Guenón for the Atlantean cataclysm of 10,961 BCE, which he calculated as "7,200 years before the year 720 of the Kali Yuga."[2] It is also within one hundred years of the Biblical Deluge date calculated by Alford (10,983 BCE) and of the beginning of the "Third Sun," or world age, according to Mesoamerican chronologies (11,132 BCE).

The mystery deepens if we consider the starting point of the Egyptian, Assyrian, and Mayan calendars. The ancient Egyptians possessed a division of time based on the Sothic cycle of 1,460 years, which marked the periodicity of the heliacal rising of the star Sirius. We know from inscriptions that a new Sothic cycle, the last of Egyptian civilization, began in the year 1322 BCE. If we count seven more Sothic cycles before this, we get to the year 11,542 BCE as the beginning of the calendar. This marked a unique astronomical phenomenon: the coincidence of an eclipse of the sun, visible from the island of Tylos, in the Persian Gulf, at dawn on August 29, 11,542 BCE, with the heliacal rising of Sirius.[3] If we look then at the Assyrian calendar, we find that a new cycle of 1,805 years commenced in the year 712 BCE. The Assyrians, wrote Russian scientist Nikolai Zhirov, "had a lunar calendar which gave the cycle as equal to 22,325 lunar months or 1,805 years."[4] If we turn the clock back six full cycles from the beginning of the last known cycle in 712 BCE, we end up again with the same date of 11,542 BCE that also marks the beginning of the Egyptian calendar. This can hardly be a coincidence, for the two calendars may be shown to align only once in 527,060 years.

In the Maya system, the current Long Count began in 3114 BCE. A great year in the Maya calendar was composed of twenty baktuns of 2,880,000 days, or 7,885 years. If we count another 7,885 years before 3114 BCE, we find that the previous cycle began in 10,999 BCE, a date which is only less than 50 years apart from that of Guenón's Atlantean cataclysm of 10,961 BCE.

Finally, we must consider the hints given by Berossus concerning the date of the last terrestrial cataclysm. In a most interesting fragment preserved by Seneca (4 BCE–65 CE), Berossus describes alternating catastrophes of fire and water "brought about by the course of the planets." According to Seneca, "So positive is he on this point that he assigns a definite date both for the conflagration and the deluge. All that the Earth inherits will, he assures us, be consigned to flames, when the planets, which now move in different orbits, all assemble in Cancer, so arranged in one row that a straight line may pass through their spheres. When the same gathering takes place in Capricorn, then we are in danger of the deluge."[5]

With the help of astronomical software using the sidereal zodiac, it is possible to calculate that the last time such a planetary alignment occurred in Capricorn was on the Julian calendar date of October 28–30, 11,266 BCE.[6]

Another interesting document, the Coptic papyrus of Abu Hormeis, similarly mentions a "calamity descending from the heavens" that was "foretold in the stars." The papyrus in question was allegedly found at the monastery of Abu Hormeis, near Sakkara in Egypt, and was claimed to be a copy made during the reign of the Roman Emperor Diocletian (244–311 CE) of "an inscription of great antiquity, written on a tablet of gold." The original papyrus is now lost, but it survives in an Arab translation of the ninth century CE.[7] According to that translation, a great cataclysm occurred "when the heart of the Lion entered into the first minute of the head of Cancer"; in other words, during the precessional Age of Leo (11,000–8,000 BCE), since the constellation of Cancer follows Leo only in the precessional cycle.[8]

Whatever one makes of these predictions, it is certainly remarkable that over ten different ancient chronologies, from ancient Sumer to Chaldea, Egypt, India, and Mesoamerica, all record at least one major cataclysm in the period between 11,500 and 9200 BCE. As we will see, this set of dates also remarkably agrees with the timescale of the Younger Dryas, a mysterious cold spell accompanied by megafaunal extinctions that occurred at the end of the last ice age.

THE THREE AGES OF ATLANTIS

The beginnings of Atlantean civilization are shrouded in mystery. According

to the esoteric tradition, higher spiritual entities took human form and incarnated on Earth at the beginning of the Atlantean period. “They were therefore divine-humans, double entities, higher spirits who had taken human bodies,” wrote the great philosopher and esotericist Rudolf Steiner, who also added that “their true home was not on the earth.”[9] Such a view is not incompatible with that of evolutionary theory, but it requires considering the possibility of a separate physical and psycho-spiritual evolution of man.

According to traditional beliefs, the place where higher spiritual entities first manifested on Earth was very near the North Pole. It was only at a later time that this Hyperborean race took bodily form on a great Western continent, Atlantis. This was made possible by the appearance on Atlantis of the first anatomically modern humans half a million years ago. *Atlantis, not Africa, was the true cradle of mankind*. The first period of Atlantean civilization gave way to a second and then a third, the neo-Atlantean period, during which Atlantean civilization spread from its insular homeland to other parts of the world. Each world age or period was separated from the previous by natural cataclysms—great terrestrial upheavals of which the final submersion of Atlantis in 9600 BCE was but the last in order of time.

We may thus divide the greater course of Atlantean civilization into three periods.

First Atlantean Period (432,000 BCE[?]–35,335 BCE)

Very little is known of the events that characterized the first Atlantean period and the beginning of the present cycle. The esoteric tradition strongly suggests that over this immense period of time, the seat of Atlantean civilization, and thus the spiritual center of the manvantara, moved at least twice from its original northern (Hyperborean) location. According to Guenón and Evola, the location of the primordial center is not in doubt: “Our cycle began in the extreme North, in the present Arctic Ocean, and the Hyperborean civilization was destroyed in a catastrophe, probably due to a change in the inclination of the earth’s axis.”[10]

Two rather opposite poles of tradition emerged from the fragmentation of this original Hyperborean one. These came to represent the Western and Eastern poles of the primordial tradition, both having their origin in the far North. The first was, of course, located on Atlantis. The second occupied an

island in what is now the Gobi Desert but was once a vast inland sea in central Asia.

There is also the tradition, echoed in the Vedas, of the war fought by the Initiates of the Sacred Island against the Atlantean sorcerers called the Sons of Belial. It was this war that would ultimately result in the Fall and the loss of humanity's divine status at the end of the first Atlantean period. Sorcery, or what we may perhaps call a "semiscientific interference with the balance of nature," was, according to Blavatsky, what caused the first Atlantean cataclysm. "So ungodly," she wrote, were the magical practices employed by the Atlantean sorcerers, "that it has since become necessary for the subsequent races to draw a thick veil" over them.[11] The consequences of this event not only were felt on the physical plane but also resulted in the loss of many of the psychic abilities of the early races.

Second Atlantean Period (35,335 BCE–10,961 BCE)

The second Atlantean period lasted from the time of the Fall, about 35,335 BCE (according to Babylonian chronologies), to the second Atlantean cataclysm, which coincided with the onset of the Younger Dryas in about 10,961 BCE. It is possible that at this time the same highly evolved spiritual beings who had first incarnated on Earth at the beginning of the Atlantean period participated in the reconstruction of Atlantean civilization after the Fall. This would account for the Babylonian and early Sumerian traditions of a second descent of kingship "from Heaven" after the Flood.

Under the guidance of the divine dynasties, Atlantis rose again to the status of a world power. It was also toward the end of this second period that Atlantean settlers first established permanent colonies in other parts of the world.

Based on the writings of Manetho and the Turin Papyrus, we may date the beginnings of the Egyptian colony to the period between 16,520 BCE and 14,125 BCE. We may also take the date of 15,936 BCE contained in the *Codex Vaticanus 3738* as that of the foundation of the original Mesoamerican and South American colonies. The foundation of the second Atlantean Empire may thus be situated no later than 17,441 BCE—a date that marks the beginning of the Dwapara Yuga in Guenón's chronology.

Even if we were to push the beginnings of the second Atlantean Empire

further back in time to 21,142 BCE (the beginning of the first sun, according to *Codex Vaticanus 3738*) or 20,727 BCE (according to the Nippur Tablet B), this would still leave the enormous period of nearly fifteen thousand years after the Fall wholly unaccounted for. Ancient sources do not help to shed any light on the events between the Fall and the foundation of the second Atlantean Empire. We will therefore refer to this period as the "Great Hiatus."

Third (Neo-Atlantean) Period (10,961 BCE–9600 BCE)

The second Atlantean cataclysm in 10,961 BCE marked the beginning of the neo-Atlantean period, which lasted through the entire Younger Dryas until the final submersion of Atlantis in 9600 BCE, as recorded by Plato. Two great centers of Atlantean civilization seem to have emerged at this time, taking the place of the original mid-Atlantic seat: Hierakonpolis (the city of the Falcon) in Egypt[*15] and Tiwanaku (sometimes called Taypikala) in South America.

Post-Atlantean Period (9600 BCE–2134 BCE)

The boundary between the neo-Atlantean and post-Atlantean periods is necessarily ill-defined. The final destruction and submersion of Atlantis in 9600 BCE did not mark the immediate end of the neo-Atlantean civilization. However, it certainly pushed it along a path of irreversible decline.

A breakwater event seems to have been the fall of the eastern neoAtlantean capital of Hierakonpolis, with its dynasty of semidivine kings, which in the chronology of Manetho occurred in 8913 BCE. In the absence of reliable chronological data, the fate of the neo-Atlantean empires in Central and South America is still a matter of speculation. They were probably already gone by 7122 BCE, a date that the *Codex Vaticanus 3738* associates with the end of the "Fourth Sun" or world age, but the exact circumstances of their demise are unknown.

In the Mediterranean, the fall of Hierakonpolis created a power vacuum that cast civilization once again into a dark age. In this vacuum, invasions by various "Sea Peoples" occurred. These Sea Peoples were themselves the most likely descendants of a northern "Thulean" Atlantean colony whose forced

migration into the Mediterranean was likely triggered by further geological upheavals in the North Atlantic.

It is possible that during this period the spiritual center of the manvantara and of Atlantean civilization went again underground: It may have been from this mysterious center that neo-Atlantean missionaries once again brought their teachings into the world, contributing to the rise of the first historical civilizations of Egypt and Mesopotamia.

Since then, the location of the spiritual center of the manvantara has become shrouded in mystery. A thick veil has covered its manifestations throughout ancient and medieval times, up until the modern age.

The following list provides an outline of the course of Atlantean civilization, from its obscure beginnings in the early phases of the cycle until the dawn of the historical period. We will frequently refer to this illustration of Atlantean history throughout the rest of the book.

The Three Ages of Atlantis According to Traditional Chronologies

First Atlantean Period: 432,000 BCE (?)–35,335 BCE

- "Primeval Age of the Gods"
- Incarnation of highly evolved spiritual beings in human form on Atlantis
- Civilization develops in Atlantis
- The City of the Golden Gates is founded
- Occult sciences reach their peak in Atlantis, and Atlantean magic degenerates into sorcery
- War between the "Children of the Law of One" and the "Sons
- of Belial"
- Fall of man; Atlantis destroyed; the "White Lodge" retreats underground

Second Atlantean Period: 35,335 BCE–10,961

BCE

- Atlantean civilization recovers under the guide of the initiates of the “White Lodge”; an Aryan empire of the fifth root race is established in the Gobi
- Foundation of the Second Atlantean Empire
- Atlantean colonization; establishment of the African, Egyptian, and South American colonies
- Cometary impact and beginning of Younger Dryas; global flooding; destruction and fragmentation of the Atlantean landmass

Third (Neo-Atlantean) Period: 10,961 BCE–9600 BCE

- Second wave of Atlantean colonization into Egypt and South America
- Rise of the neo-Atlantean empires in the West; hegemony of Hierakonpolis in the Mediterranean
- End of Younger Dryas; final destruction and submersion of Atlantis; worldwide rise in sea levels and desertification of the Sahara

Post-Atlantean Period: 9600 BCE–2134 BCE (?)

- Fall of Hierakonpolis
- Thulean invasion of the Mediterranean from the north; first wave of Sea Peoples migrations
- Worldwide collapse of neo-Atlantean civilization; beginning of dark age
- Subsequent migrations of Sea Peoples and Pelasgians into Europe and the Mediterranean; birth of European megalithic civilization
- Post-Atlantean missionaries become the founders of the first historical civilizations in Egypt, Sumer, and Mesoamerica;

reign of the Nephilim

- Fall of the Old Kingdom in Egypt and decline of Sumer
- Departure of the gods; the sacred center of the manvantara becomes concealed at the beginning of the Kali Yuga

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TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

One of the questions that we will attempt to answer in the following chapters concerns the fate of Atlantean civilization in the aftermath of the two global cataclysms of 35,335 BCE and 10,961 BCE. From the brief outline of Atlantean history given above, it is clear that the Atlantean colonization of the ancient world occurred in several waves corresponding to major upheavals and global cataclysms, and it was thus not a single or even a continuous episode.

The last wave of Atlantean colonization, in the aftermath of the great Atlantean cataclysm of 10,961 BCE, is perhaps the best documented. It left abundant archaeological evidence, not only in the form of enigmatic ruins on both sides of the Atlantic but also in countless mythological accounts describing the arrival of the gods on nearly every continent.

Birthplace of the Gods

The ancient Egyptians believed that their gods originated from a land to the west, called Amenti. In some hieroglyphic formulas, the god Thoth, considered to be the inventor of writing, mathematics, and astronomy, bears the enigmatic title of "ruler of oversea lands."[12] Chapter 161 of the *Book of the Dead* assigns to this god the same role of sky-bearer that the Greeks attributed to Atlas, the mythical Titan and first king of Atlantis, whereas Thoth's birthplace is rendered in inscriptions as the mysterious and undeciphered "lake of the flame of NSRSR," or "lake of two fires."[13] This was perhaps the same as Iu Neserer, the mythical "Isle of Flames," said to be the place where the gods were born—a volcanic island in many ways resembling the island-homeland of the Primeval Ones in the Edfu Texts.

According to another myth, Thoth "saved other deities during a cosmic catastrophe of the Sun," by carrying them "to the Eastern side of the sky to the far side of Lake Ha."[14]

A most interesting fragment quoted by the great ethnologist Carleton Coon of Harvard University reveals further details of the original homeland of the gods. This land was "foggy" and bordered with high volcanic mountains: "On the side away from the mountains was a huge lake, and in between lay a network of rivers and irrigation ditches . . . towards the mountain rose a dense forest . . . the trees were conifers, sacred to Osiris."[15] In the words of Coon, "Nothing of this description resembles Egypt," and it could, indeed, be taken to be a description of a far more northern land.[16]

West of Egypt, East of America

Across the Atlantic, in Central and South America, the homeland of the gods Quetzalcoatl, Kukulkan, and Itzamná was said to lie across the Atlantic Ocean to the east, and Aztlan was the name given by the Aztecs to the original island-homeland of their ancestors.

All over the world, we find similar myths describing the arrival of a highly civilized race from a land situated in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean. These myths carry the memory of the first wave of Atlantean colonists that reached the opposite sides of the Atlantic at the end of the last ice age.

There must have been, in summary, a "civilization zero" that was the precursor of all post–Ice Age cultures, one whose mysterious monuments are found throughout the entire planet. Far from being a spontaneous development, the pyramids of Egypt and the mysterious stone ruins of Bolivia and Peru represent the legacy from a far older and much greater civilization. These and many other great monuments emerged suddenly from the mists of prehistory, knowing no period of development or evolution, and appeared already fully formed as if brought there from elsewhere.

Only an insular civilization that vanished can provide an answer to the sudden appearance and disappearance of culture in so many different parts of the world.

Atlantean colonists gave rise to a massive surge of construction that within a few millennia covered virtually every corner of the planet with a

network of pyramids, cyclopean stone structures, mounds, and earthworks that marked the course of the sun and the stars from horizon to horizon. No effort was spared to accomplish this worldwide task, which involved no less than the resurrection of the former world of the gods.

Yet by 9600 BCE, the great neo-Atlantean project lay in ruins. Whatever cataclysm brought about the fall of the neo-Atlantean Empire, its consequences were felt almost immediately all over the world: construction stopped, and many of the most ambitious engineering projects came to a halt. The suddenness of the collapse is proven by the unfinished stonework of Egypt, Lebanon, and Peru.

Only slowly did civilization recover over the following millennia, sometimes resuming work exactly from where it had been left thousands of years earlier, albeit with much scarcer resources and more primitive means than those of the original builders. This is shown by the multiple stages of construction that characterize such sites as the pyramids of Egypt and the megalithic ruins of Cuzco and Tiwanaku, each phase representing a different chapter in the multiple waves of colonization from Atlantis that reached the coasts of America, Africa, and Europe.

SURVIVAL AND REBIRTH

What was left of Atlantean civilization after the final cataclysm of 9,600 BCE and the fall of the neo-Atlantean Empire in Egypt and South America is a matter of speculation. Certainly, the flow of Atlantean missionaries did not stop with the submersion of Atlantis but continued until at least 5000 BCE and perhaps as late as 3000 BCE.

It is possible that some islands of high culture survived the general collapse of neo-Atlantean civilization. It is there that we should look in search of answers to the question of the origin of those Atlantean missionaries who roamed the Earth in the aftermath of the great catastrophe and kept the torch of civilization alive during the dark ages that followed.

Fallen Angels

In the biblical story of the fall of the angels, we find both the parable of the

spiritual degeneration of a golden race ("My spirit shall not abide in mortals forever, for they are flesh" says God in Genesis 6:3) and the appearance of divine teachers, who later became identified with the angels or *Watchers* of biblical tradition, found in both the antediluvian and postdiluvian periods.

These angels or Watchers appear to have been in possession of a very advanced knowledge, as described in various passages of the *Book of Enoch* and the *Book of Jubilees.* Few details are given concerning the origin of the Watchers, but the few hints given in the *Book of Enoch* are quite suggestive of a westerly, volcanic island that was said to be located next to "the fire of the West, which receives every setting of the sun" and where a great river of fire "discharges itself into the great sea towards the West."[17] Such was the prison of the Watchers, the fallen angels who had "defiled mankind and led it astray," near the "mountains of the darkness of winter and the place whence all the waters of the deep flow."[18]

The Watchers of Hebrew tradition find their closest parallel in the Sumerian and Babylonian *apkallus,* or "sages," legendary culture heroes and survivors from the Flood, who similarly possessed extraordinary wisdom from the gods and handed it over to mankind.

According to Berossus, these demigods (which he called Oannes) gave men an insight into "the letters and sciences, and arts of every kind." They taught early humanity "to construct cities, found temples, compile laws, and the principles of geometric knowledge." In short, they offered "everything which could tend to soften manners and humanize their lives."[19]

The demigods were said to have appeared "from that part of the Erythrean Sea which borders upon Babylonia," an origin that is in accordance with the presumed location of Dilmun in Sumerian texts.[20] This was a sort of terrestrial paradise, a mythical island located in the direction "where the Sun rises," crossed by "long waterways, rivers and canals."[21] Quite possibly, it was one of the many secondary centers of Atlantean civilization, located perhaps in the now submerged portions of the Persian Gulf.

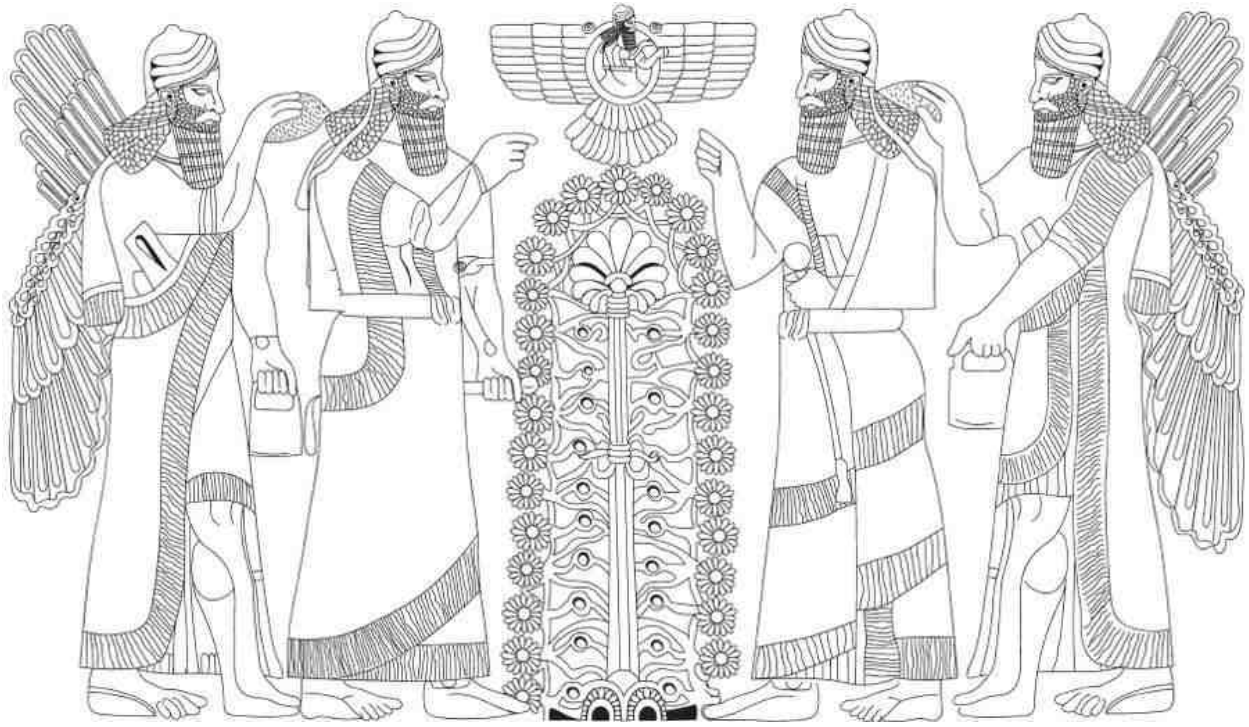

Figure 3.1. Assyrian representation of the apkallus, the antediluvian sages, flanking the Sacred Tree from Room I, North-West Palace at Nimrud, Iraq, in the neo-Assyrian period (ca. 865–860 BCE). British Museum, London.

Messengers of the Gods

In the New World, the indigenous peoples encountered by Europeans kept very similar traditions of the arrival from the sea of bearded white "gods" who had in the distant past visited their ancestors to teach them their culture. In Mexico, it was Quetzalcoatl, the "Feathered Serpent," a white man with fair complexion and a long beard. He was known for rejecting all forms of human sacrifice and for teaching men how to live in peace, the use of fire and metals, and the art of building in stone. He founded the great city of Tollan (Tula), and under his rule, the race of the Toltecs prospered.[22] Quetzalcoatl was credited with the invention of the calendar, the art and science of medicine, botany, metalworking, and astronomy. "In truth," wrote Bernardino de Sahagún, "he invented all the wonderful, precious, marvelous things which they [the Toltecs] made."[23] Quetzalcoatl was said to have landed with his companions at Pánuco, on the coast of the Gulf of Mexico, coming from a mysterious land to the east, beyond the sea, which was

sometimes called by the name of Tlapallan, “the Land of Black and Red”—both colors traditionally associated with volcanic activity.

Very similar stories were told in the Yucatan and Chiapas of Gucumatz and Kukulkan, both names similarly meaning “Feathered Serpent” in the Maya language. Other myths from Yucatan related the arrival of the “People of the Serpent,” who “came from the East in boats across the water with their leader Itzamná, Serpent of the East.”[24]

In South America, nearly identical accounts were given of Viracocha and Thunupa. Of Viracocha, it was said that he was a “white man, of great stature, with a long and flowing beard.” He wore a white tunic and carried a staff in one hand and an object “like a book” in the other hand.[25] “Wherever they went,” wrote the conquistador Pedro Cieza de León, “they transformed the mountains in valleys, and the valleys in fertile fields, causing water to gush forth from between the rocks.”[26] These demigods came in very remote times from the region of Lake Titicaca and the ancient dead city of Tiwanaku, “preaching many good and wise things, which have since become lost and forgotten.” Eventually, they left in the direction of the Pacific Ocean, “walking above the waters, never to be seen again.”[27]

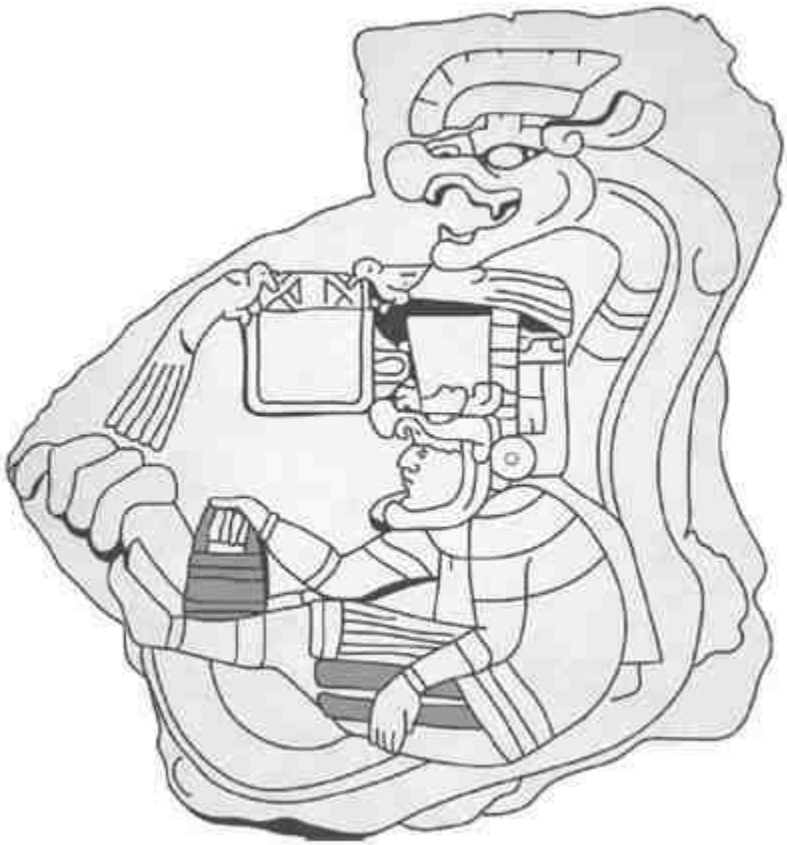

Figure 3.2. Monument 19 of La Venta (ca. 1200–800 BCE), containing one of the earliest Olmec depictions of Quetzalcoatl. National Museum of Anthropology, Mexico City.

From these traditions, it is clear that not only did multiple waves of Atlantean colonists reach the coasts of both the Old and the New World in the aftermath of the global cataclysms of 10,961 BCE and 9600 BCE, but that this inflow also continued for many thousands of years thereafter, leaving a permanent mark in the cultural and genetic makeup of the peoples they encountered. Quite possibly, these different waves did not all originate directly from the Atlantean motherland, for the mention of such secondary centers as Dilmun and Tiwanaku suggests that at least part of this movement of peoples did not begin until well into the neo-Atlantean or post-Atlantean periods.

The Survival of Knowledge over Thousands of Years

Another important unresolved question concerns the way these people,

survivors from the last Atlantean cataclysm, could have for thousands of years preserved intact such a vast body of technical and scientific knowledge from their sunken homeland.

There are clear hints in the works of Berossus, Ammianus Marcellinus, and Flavius Josephus to the existence of secret repositories where the knowledge of the antediluvian world was preserved through the cataclysm for the benefit of a future mankind.

The esoteric tradition also abounds with references to lost knowledge and ancient repositories from the time before the Flood. In the early part of the twentieth century, the American psychic Edgar Cayce spoke of at least three Atlantean “Halls of Records” situated in different parts of the world, including Egypt and Yucatan. A very similar story was told by the self-proclaimed Buddhist monk T. Lobsang Rampa (birth name: Cyril Henry Hoskin) of an antediluvian “Cave of the Ancients” existing somewhere in central Tibet and containing many records and artifacts from the lost civilization. Blavatsky spoke of the “Tomb of the Incas” and of the labyrinthine tunnels beneath Cuzco where great treasures were hidden before the Spanish conquest, which is possibly related to similar notions of a lost “metallic library” in Ecuador.

All over the world, we find the same idea that a sacred knowledge of divine origin was preserved from a global cataclysm. This knowledge was essential to the resurrection of the former world of the gods in the aftermath of the global catastrophe, and it still stands at the core of many of the esoteric traditions that will be presented in the following chapters. It is based on this testimony that we will hereafter attempt a reconstruction of the course of Atlantean civilization from its obscure beginnings until the time of its fall nearly twelve thousand years ago.

PART II

THE FIRST TIME

4

THE MYSTERIOUS ORIGINS OF MAN

The next few chapters will be highly controversial, even for the more open-minded readers. Their writing has been preceded by extensive questioning and debate over the very nature of esoteric knowledge and its validity as part of an objectively sound and verifiable—albeit admittedly *nonconventional*—historical narrative. We will hereby present the facts as stated by the esoteric tradition, leaving to the reader's own judgment the decision of what to do with this information. At certain points, we will limit ourselves to drawing the reader's attention to certain remarkable analogies across the different narrations and their seeming consistency with mythical and religious traditions from around the world. We are convinced that, although the means by which this peculiar form of knowledge may be acquired could appear controversial and even questionable to the more scientifically minded readers, it can still provide valuable elements for the reconstruction of our most remote past, where every other avenue of knowledge fails.

"It is but a small part of pre-historic human experience which can be learnt by the methods of ordinary history," wrote the famous Austrian esotericist and philosopher Rudolf Steiner (1861–1925) in the preface to his *Atlantis and Lemuria.* "Historic evidence throws light on only a few thousand

years, and even what archaeology, paleontology and geology can teach us is very limited Everything belonging to the outer world of sense is subject to time, and time destroys what in time arises."[1]

According to Steiner, there are, however, other avenues of knowledge that are open to anyone willing to take the path of initiation and that can lead to direct experience of the "everlasting sources that underlie the passing things of time"—what are called in the language of Theosophy the *Akashic Records*. There, the records of the past stand before the initiate, "not as dead witnesses of history, but in the fullness of life . . . in a certain sense, played out before him."[2]

Although admittedly not infallible, the methods of esoteric knowledge and spiritual perception have a trustworthiness that, continues Steiner, is "far greater than in the outer world of senses." Among all mystery schools, he observes, "such absolute agreement has reigned for thousands of years that it is impossible to compare it with the agreement existing among ordinary historians even for a century Initiates describe at all times and in all places essentially the same thing."[3]

The picture of human evolution presented by the esoteric tradition is one profoundly different from the canons of modern evolutionary theory. Yet the two are not entirely exclusive of each other. Both have at their core the belief that different human races or species inhabited our planet. Where they differ is in assuming separate paths for the physical and spiritual evolution of our species. To ignore the latter is to ignore a fundamental piece of the great mystery of our human origins. The next few chapters will be but a small attempt to bridge this gap.

WHEN THE GODS WALKED AMONG MEN

Traditions from all over the world speak of a mythical golden age in which the gods walked among men and higher spiritual beings incarnated on Earth in human form. A number of sources, both literary and esoteric, point to Atlantis as the original place of incarnation of these higher beings. Their incarnation required a suitable material host that possessed the right physical as well as intellectual characteristics.

It is believed that the first anatomically modern humans, known as *Homo*

sapiens, appeared about two hundred thousand years ago from a branch of the Hominidae family known as *Homo heidelbergensis,* a type of early human that represented a direct evolution from *Homo erectus,* whose earliest remains have been dated to close to eight hundred thousand years ago.

Homo Atlanticus

Two main theories have been developed to explain the origin of modern humans. The first, known as the Out of Africa Theory or the Recent African Origin Theory, argues for an African origin. This is challenged by the Multiregional Theory, which argues instead for the separate evolution and cohabitation of various "modern" human species from a common ancestor that left Africa as much as two million years ago.

Within this long period of time, it is certainly possible that a separate branch of the human family could have developed in near-complete isolation on a now lost mid-Atlantic island or continent.

If Atlantis was the place where the first anatomically modern humans evolved from *Homo erectus* sometime between one million and five hundred thousand years ago, it might have been at that time that the first highly evolved "souls" incarnated into human bodies possessing the required set of physical and intellectual characteristics. It follows that the first Atlanteans would have been dual beings, possessing both a "divine" spiritual nature and a material, now fully *human,* bodily form and appearance.

So let us consider that perhaps it *was* in Atlantis that, under the influence of highly evolved spiritual beings, early hominins, still more ape than human, became mentally and physiologically changed to beget the first truly human race. These were, according to the esoteric tradition, still *semidivine* men, higher souls imprisoned in bodies that were now entirely human in substance and appearance, and thus also fully *mortal.* The story of the Atlantean race and its sub-races is thus the story of the *materialization* of a divine principle.

Esoteric legends speak of this race as natural-born mediums, possessing an innate ability to connect with the divine and the hidden *life force* that permeates all things. Their faculties, both mental and physical, were far in excess of those of modern humans. It was through man's progressive fall into materialism that many of the more spiritual faculties of early humanity became numbed or lost.

In the words of Steiner, mastery of this life force by early humanity was what allowed for the development of science and technology "of a nature entirely different from our own," including such apparently impossible achievements as the construction of airships capable of soaring above the Earth, propelled by purely vital forces.[4] Yet, continues Steiner, all of this was lost when "the great mass of the inhabitants of Atlantis fell into decadence . . . and the so-called Aryans, to which race belongs the humanity of our present civilization, sprang from a small division of these Atlanteans."[5] These words are strongly reminiscent of those of Plato, for whom the spiritual as well as material decadence of the Atlanteans was due to an ever-increasing "admixture" of the mortal element with the divine through their interbreeding with a different, less evolved human type.[6]

The Atlantean Sub-races in the Tradition of Rudolf Steiner

For Steiner, the Atlantean was the fourth root race of humanity. Each root race possessed "physical and mental qualities entirely different from those of that which preceded it." The distinctive trait of Atlantean humanity was its use of *memory*, as opposed to *thought-power*, the latter being the distinctive trait of the present Aryan humanity. In addition, each root race had to pass through different stages, and these, adds Steiner, "again are always sevenfold Thus, the members of a root-race are divided into seven sub-races."[7] The names of the seven sub-races of Atlantean humanity are given by Steiner as the Rmoahal, Tlavati, Toltec, Turanian, Ancient Semite, Akkadian, and Mongolian.

Knowledge was apparently innate in the early Atlantean sub-races, for "the Lemuro-Atlantean had no need of discovering and fixing in his memory that which his informing principle knew at the moment of its incarnation." In time, this knowledge assumed a more "scientific" character, and the people started to interest themselves in the control of natural phenomena and the manipulation of Earth energies. The Atlantean race thus developed "a knowledge of physiology, psychology, sacred mathematics, geometry and metrology, in their right applications to symbols and figures, which are but glyphs, recording observed natural and scientific facts"; in short, "a most minute and profound knowledge of nature."[8]

It was only toward the end of the cycle that the Atlanteans truly became

the terrible sorcerers of esoteric legends, a race dominated by violent passions, rapidly degenerating but still deeply versed in primeval wisdom and the secrets of nature. It was this race, wrote the Theosophist Helena Blavatsky (1831–1891), that became "black with sin" and "brought the divine names of the Asuras, the Rakshasas and the Daityas into disrepute, and passed them on to posterity as the names of fiends."[9] Eventually, a great war erupted between the Aryan adepts of the nascent fifth root race and the sorcerers of Atlantis, which may have been among the causes of the final collapse of Atlantean civilization.

THE MAKING OF MAN

About forty thousand years ago, a new group of *Homo sapiens* known as Cro-Magnon man made its appearance in parts of Europe, North Africa, and the Near East. They were a taller, more powerfully built, and intellectually superior type of man than any of the other *Homo sapiens* groups that had preceded them. Their brain capacity averaged 1,600 cubic centimeters (97.64 cubic inches), larger than the average for modern humans.

Cro-Magnon man represented a huge discontinuity in the panorama of human evolution, possessing very different physical characteristics from their Neanderthal "cousins" and a seemingly fully fashioned art and culture. "For over a million years," observe Christian O'Brien and Barbara Joy O'Brien, "Evolution through the hominid strain had been slow and uneventful. . . . Overnight as it were, on this time-scale of a million years; there appeared a modern creature with an increase in brain size of between 50 and 80 percent over his contemporary." Most significantly, they add, "no ancestor or connecting lineage with any known progenital strain has yet been discovered."[10]

The geographic distribution of Cro-Magnon man is also interesting. His remains have been found in areas of western Europe and northern Africa, but also possibly in North and South America, strongly hinting at an Atlantic origin for this human type.[11] Anthropologists have identified at least four major "invasions" of Europe by Cro-Magnon man. The first occurred forty thousand years ago and is associated with the Aurignacian tradition of cave art and stone tools. It was followed about twenty thousand years ago by a

second, smaller invasion called the Solutrean, characterized by the production of very fine flint and obsidian blades and points. The last of the Cro-Magnon invasions occurred between sixteen thousand and ten thousand years ago and is associated with the so-called Magdalenian and Azilian cultural complexes.

Paraphrasing the eminent French anthropologist Francois Bordes, author R. Cedric Leonard observes, “Prehistorians don’t have the foggiest idea of the origin of these invasions. . . . They invariably appeared on the western shores of Europe and Africa, even including some of the Atlantic Isles close to these continents: Always the sites are clustered in the West, their number diminishing towards the East.”[12] One possible explanation for these apparent invasions rests on the geological instability of the Atlantean continent and its gradual subsidence over the course of the Pleistocene epoch (2.58 million to 11,700 years ago).

Despite his remarkable artistic sensitivity and environmental adaptation, Cro-Magnon man was still a primitive who ignored the use of metals and of all those other implements that we today associate with a settled, civilized existence. This leaves open the possibility that Cro-Magnon man may have been genetically engineered on Atlantis as a slave laborer and brought to Europe, North Africa, and North America to provide a cheap and disposable workforce over the course of the first and second Atlantean periods, as suggested by numerous traditions.

The appearance of Cro-Magnon man roughly coincides in esoteric chronologies with that of the fifth, the Aryan, root race. This provides further ground to believe that Cro-Magnon man was, in fact, the result of hybridization between Atlantean man and another yet undetermined hominin species, quite possibly the Neanderthals. Such could be the origin of the biblical tradition of the antediluvian Nephilim, the hybrid progeny of the “Sons of God” and the “Daughters of Man.”[13]

Over a thousand years older than the account of Genesis, the ancient Babylonian epic of *Atra-Hasis* was the first to describe mankind as a slave species of the gods, destined to do the heavy work and “carry the burden of the toil of the Gods.”[14] In the Babylonian epic, the creation of man was the great accomplishment of Ninkharsag, the “Life-Mother” of the gods. It was she who “thoroughly mixed in the clay . . . god and man” to create a *lullu*, a man.[15] The details of the process, as described in the Babylonian epic, are such as to suggest an actual operation involving the genetic combination of

the DNA of two different species—in other terms, the creation of an Atlantean-human *hybrid.* Since the "gods" were said to have provided the male element, the female eggs must have come from human women. These could only have belonged to one of the hominin species inhabiting the Earth at the time.

If genetic engineering and manipulation were required in order to create the first divine-human hybrids, it follows that enough genetic differentiation existed between those Atlanteans (the "divine" element) and the rest of still primitive mankind (the "human" element) as to impede natural procreation.

Other sources, including the Maya Popol Vuh and the works of the Babylonian priest Berossus, describe several "failed" creations prior to this one. These resulted in the appearance of beings that had only the semblance of men, but otherwise lacked intelligence and direction. When the gods finally succeeded, the result was so similar to them that they became afraid and decided to "blow mist in their eyes" and "cloud their sight" so that they could not themselves become like gods.[16] In the Bible, Adam and Eve were similarly barred from the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge and the days of men were capped at 120 years.[17]

Atlantean DNA

Where does modern humanity fit into this picture? All humans living today are in some way descendants of the first Cro-Magnons, the early modern humans. At the same time, just as the percentage of Neanderthal and other hominin DNA varies across human populations, the contribution of Nephilim or Atlantean DNA may also vary within a certain narrow range. Both the canonical Bible and the apocryphal *Book of Enoch* affirm that the Atlantean Nephilim were thoroughly exterminated and perished in the Deluge. Yet various passages seem to contradict this statement by suggesting that at least a few of their race escaped the general destruction.

Cro-Magnon man may have literally carried in his blood the genetic footprint of his Atlantean forefathers. About thirty thousand years ago, roughly at the same time as the first of the various Cro-Magnon "invasions," a new mtDNA haplogroup[*16] entered the genetic makeup of early Europeans and North Americans. This new mtDNA haplogroup, known as Haplogroup X, has its highest frequency in modern populations among the Basques of

northern Spain; the Berbers of the Atlantic coast of Morocco and North Africa; and the Druze minority of Israel, Lebanon, and Syria, as well as in certain isolated communities in the north of Scotland, the South of Spain, and southeastern Turkey. It is almost entirely absent from East Asia and sub-Saharan Africa but is again present in North America among the native populations of eastern Canada and the Great Lakes region. That this haplogroup can be found in equal measure in both Europe and North America but is notably absent from Siberia and East Asia suggests that it originally spread across the Atlantic. The stone-tool-making tradition most commonly associated with Haplogroup X is known as the Solutrean.

Figure 4.1. The distribution of Haplogroup X among the world's indigenous populations (after Oppenheimer, Bradley, and Stanford, 2014).

Proponents of the so-called Solutrean hypothesis observe that while the Clovis projectile points in North America resemble points of the western European Solutrean culture, no Clovis tools have been found in Siberia and Alaska. It is, indeed, possible that Haplogroup X entered North America from across the Atlantic in two separate waves, one in 28,000 BCE and the other around 10,000 BCE.[18] Even if Haplogroup X does not turn out to be

Atlantean DNA, its distribution is certainly significant in marking the path of the Cro-Magnon invasions on both sides of the Atlantic.

A possibly related issue concerns the greater diffusion of the Rh-negative blood type among many of the same populations that also exhibit a higher frequency of Haplogroup X in their mtDNA. As it turns out, most humans living today have in common with primates the Rh(D) antigen, which is found in about 85 percent of modern Europeans. An estimated 15 percent of the European population, however, does not possess the antigen. If all mankind had evolved from the same ancestral line, their blood would be necessarily compatible. However, so strong is the incompatibility between Rh-positive and Rh-negative blood types that a mother who is Rh-negative may develop an adverse immune reaction to an Rh-positive baby, which could turn out to be fatal for the baby. It follows that either a "foreign" genetic stream crossed the hominin line at some point in the course of human evolution or a genetic mutation was responsible for the appearance of the Rh-negative blood type. If the latter were true, however, the Rh-negative blood type—itself a recessive trait—should have naturally disappeared through the genetic admixture with populations carrying a higher frequency of the Rh(D) antigen; that is, unless the original pool of Rh-negative individuals was sufficiently large, relatively homogeneous, and genetically isolated. This alone would seemingly exclude the possibility of a fortuitous mutation.

The Rh-negative blood type is comparatively more frequent among populations of Western European descent, infrequent in Africa and West Asia, and virtually absent from East Asia and Oceania. Only the Basques of northern Spain exhibit, among all human populations, a frequency of the Rh-negative blood type greater than 50 percent.[19] Other populations with a high frequency of the Rh-negative blood type include the Ait Hadiddu Berbers of Morocco and the indigenous Guanche inhabitants of the Canary Islands—again suggesting an Atlantic route of diffusion for this peculiar blood type contemporaneous with the Cro-Magnon invasions.

What other clues does early human DNA reveal about the traits and physical characteristics of the early Atlanteans? The Cro-Magnon race, which according to our hypothesis was at least 50 percent Atlantean, was robustly and powerfully built—particularly well suited for the kind of heavy duties that the genetically engineered lullus were meant to accomplish in the service of the "gods." It was a highly intelligent race, with a brain capacity in excess

of that of modern humans. It was also notably taller than other contemporary human species, with the average individual standing at over 182 centimeters (6 feet) tall. Interestingly, DNA sequencing of Cro-Magnon populations from the last ice age shows that these early Europeans had a darker skin tone, with a high frequency of blue and light-colored eyes.[20] Lighter skin tones, typical of modern European populations, may not have appeared until about twelve to six thousand years ago, perhaps due to a genetic mutation. The evidence pointing to a darker skin complexion of early Europeans is particularly interesting in light of the long-standing esoteric tradition of a *Red* Atlantean race. The very name of Adam, the first created man, literally means "red," indicating that he was himself a member of the Red race.[21]

Of course, we cannot be sure of which traits modern humanity inherited from its Atlantean ancestors. Red skin color, great stature, and light-colored eyes might all have been among these traits. The biblical Watchers or "sons of God" are described as extremely tall beings with bright eyes "like burning lamps" and a body complexion "as white as snow and red as a rose." There is also evidence of the fact that the Atlanteans might have been highly dolichocephalic, meaning that their skulls had a much more elongated shape than those of modern humans. The practice of cranial deformation among many ancient elites may have arisen in imitation of the outward appearance of the "gods."

Finally, we are faced with the distinct possibility that the Atlanteans' life span was significantly longer than that of modern humans and that the length of human life was somehow genetically capped at no more than 115 or 120 years, as suggested by recent genetic research.[22] An echo of this may be found in Genesis, whereas God declares that his spirit "shall not abide in man forever, for he is flesh: his days shall be 120 years."[23] This may help to explain the marked decline in the life spans attributed to the antediluvian and postdiluvian patriarchs in both Genesis and the Sumerian king lists.

The world of thousands of years ago was one in which different human races or species occupied different stages in the scale of physical and spiritual evolution. While it would be wrong to consider our own present humanity as the peak of human evolution, our species undoubtedly preserves the genetic memory of all the ones that preceded it, including perhaps that of our makers. The search for our Atlantean ancestors becomes therefore also a search for our divine origins to unlock this potential in all and each one of us.

5

THE WORLD IN THE FIRST AGE

According to the esoteric tradition, it was not only man but also the very nature of the terrestrial environment in which he lived that changed over the course of different world ages. It is in obedience to cosmic law, Blavatsky affirms, that the face of the Earth should change and a root race be destroyed to make room for another: "Such is the fate of every continent, which—like everything else under our Sun—is born, lives, becomes decrepit, and dies."[1]

Thus, the submersion of Atlantis and Lemuria and the emergence of the present continents was no divine punishment but simply the consequence of cyclical law. In obedience to the same law, the esoteric tradition suggests that the changes that occurred in the terrestrial environment over the course of the manvantara were not limited to the Earth's lands and oceans but also extended to the physical medium itself.

THE SOLIDIFICATION OF THE WORLD

In *The Reign of Quantity and the Signs of the Times,* René Guenón discusses those subtle physical and psychical changes that can affect man's perception of reality and the physical medium itself over the course of the manvantara. According to Guenón, the world is now approaching a stage of extreme materialization or "solidification," corresponding to the lowest depths of the

Kali Yuga. It is this fall into matter that effectively prevents modern humanity from any form of communication with higher and more spiritual realities, such as was still possible in earlier times, when certain senses and forms of perception had not yet become atrophied to the extent that they are today.[2]

With the world entering a new and denser state of vibration, the physical medium itself becomes transformed. Many spiritual substances that were common in previous epochs must thus disappear when their existence is no longer compatible with the prevailing conditions. Such has been the fate, according to Guenón, of many of the relics of humanity's most ancient past, which are now, like Plato's mysterious metal called orichalcum, nothing more than a name.[3]

It has also been suggested that environmental conditions, and perhaps even the very physical laws on which our existence is based, were somehow different in ancient times. The atmosphere was much thicker, and water was more "fluid"—a fact, observed Steiner, entirely "inexplicable to the physics and chemistry of our time."[4] It is on account of these changes that it would be impossible, and indeed futile, to attempt to replicate the same effects that could be attained in former epochs with the simplest application of the so-called *life force*.

All these things, commented Guenón, are utterly ignored by our scientists, for "all their studies and their researches, being undertaken from a point of view both false and restricted, can most certainly result in nothing but the denial of everything that is not comprehended in that point of view. . . . Blind men would surely have equally sound reasons for denying the existence of light and then using that as a pretext for boasting of their superiority over normal men!"[5]

In a subsequent chapter dedicated to the limits of history and geography, Guenón further points out the many differences in the descriptions of lands and continents left by ancient geographers with those of modern geographers. Regions of the Earth that were formerly inhabited have been destroyed, while new continents and lands have emerged—a fact now commonly accepted by both esoteric and modern science.

THE LOST CONTINENTS

The esoteric tradition speaks of at least three great continents that sank in remote antiquity, to which it gives the names of Hyperborea, Lemuria (or Mu), and Atlantis.

It is now openly recognized that sea levels at the peak of the last ice age may have been as much as 125 meters (410 feet) lower than today. At the time of the last glacial maximum, about twenty-one thousand years ago, the British Isles formed one continuous landmass with northern France and continental Europe, while a vast land bridge existed where today's Bering Strait is between Siberia and Alaska. In Southeast Asia, an even greater landmass, roughly the size of Europe, called Sundaland, joined together the Malay Peninsula with the Indonesian islands of Borneo, Java, and Sumatra.

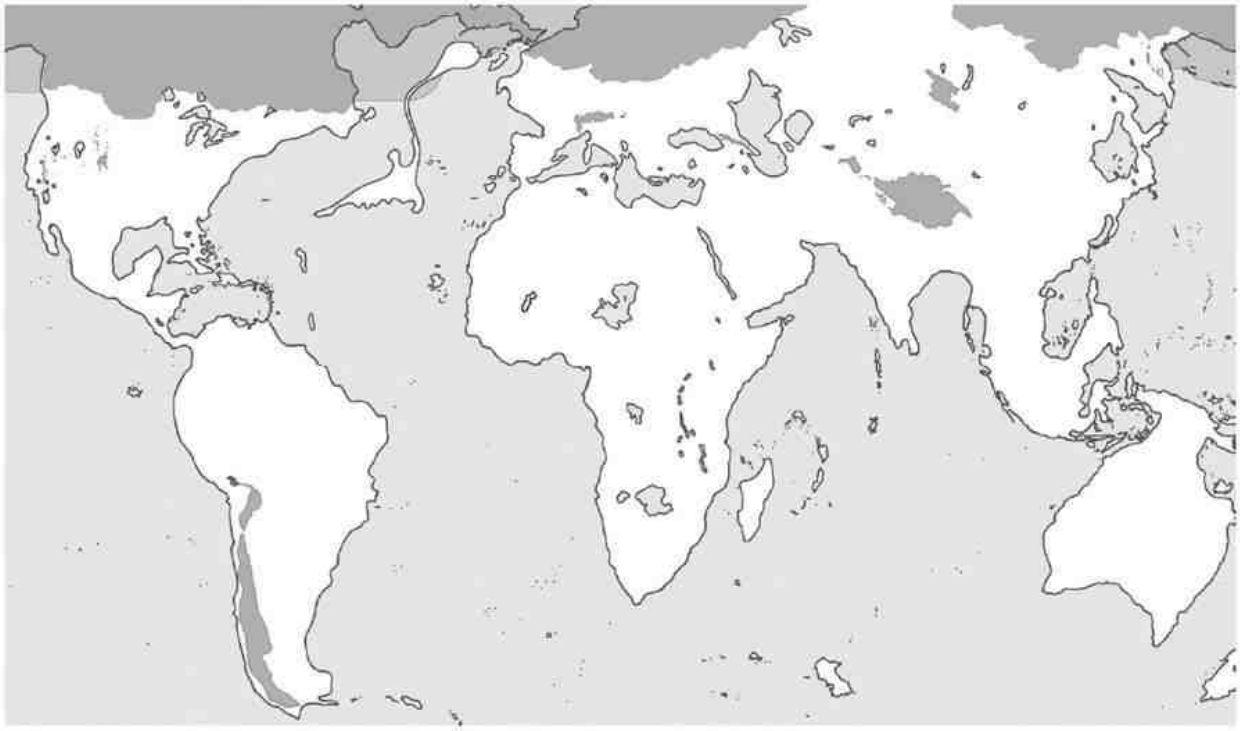

Figure 5.1. The world at the time of the last glacial maximum, about twenty-one thousand years ago, with the sites of glaciers shaded darker gray.

This picture does not consider, however, the possibility that even larger continental masses could have disappeared in the recent geological past due to telluric or volcanic upheavals.

In the esoteric tradition, the great continent of Hyperborea, the first in the history of our planet, was said to have occupied a northern, polar location at a time when the Earth still spun upright on its axis. There are reasons, moreover, to believe that Atlantis was not entirely separate from this Hyperborean continent, which may thus be truly called a *northern Atlantis*.

Geological evidence shows that a vast northern continent did indeed occupy the regions of the present Arctic Ocean, consisting of three separate but connected landmasses known as Appalachia, Beringia, and Fennoscandia. It is not known when this great northern landmass broke up and was submerged, but there are definite hints that a continuous land bridge still united Greenland to northwestern Europe as late as the end of the last ice age.[6]

A second land bridge to the south would have connected the Hyperborean continent to Iceland and the Mid-Atlantic Ridge. This sort of elongated peninsula was probably the mountainous backbone of the Atlantis of Plato and existed as a single continuous landmass at least until the first Atlantean period, when it broke up into a number of islands of varying sizes and extents.

Another very large landmass probably existed in the South Atlantic, between Africa and South America, forming a continuation of the Lemuria of esoteric legends. This great southern continent not only embraced vast areas of the Indian and Pacific oceans, "but extended in the shape of a horse-shoe past Madagascar, round South Africa through the Atlantic," according to Blavatsky.[7]

This may or may not be connected with legends of yet another sunken continent, called Mu by the British occult writer James Churchward (1851–1936), which allegedly occupied much of the present-day Pacific Ocean to the south and west of Australia. It was an immense landmass, stretching some 8,000 kilometers (5,000 miles) from east to west and over 4,800 kilometers (3,000 miles) from north to south, and it was home, according to Churchward, to a magnificent civilization that reached its zenith over fifty thousand years ago.[8] Mysterious Easter Island may have once formed part of this lost continent, of which comparatively little geological evidence survives outside of the testimony of the esoteric tradition.

ATLANTIS IN THE FIRST AGE

According to Theosophy, at least three major cataclysms occurred within the boundaries of the present manvantara. Each cataclysm dramatically changed the face of the planet, causing the disappearance of some of the old continents and the emergence of new ones. While for Blavatsky, Hyperborea was the first of the prehistoric continents on which humanity appeared, for Evola, it only came after Lemuria. Atlantis, originally a southern extension of the Hyperborean landmass, was the last of the prehistoric continents to disappear.

The Testimony of the Esoteric Tradition

In his *Story of Atlantis and the Lost Lemuria,* British author and Theosophist W. Scott-Elliott spoke of three major cataclysms that were in turn responsible for the destruction of Lemuria and the sinking of Atlantis over a period of some eight hundred thousand years. The dates of these cataclysms can be fixed on the basis of ancient chronologies to 492,000 BCE, 35,335 BCE, and 10,961 BCE.

Elliott considered that the continent of Atlantis occupied the entire arc of the Mid-Atlantic Ridge, from a point “a few degrees to the East of Iceland” to the eastern coast of South America.[9]

The first cataclysm caused the initial breakup of Atlantis into two large landmasses to the north and south, to which Elliott gave the names of Ruta and Daitya. The second cataclysm, which followed or was itself a direct consequence of the Fall, resulted in the further breakup of Daitya. Of Ruta there only remained the relatively small island of Poseidonis, whose final submergence in 9564 BCE is the one traditionally referred to as the sinking of Plato’s Atlantis.

The events of the last two cataclysms left the continent terribly rent. Scott-Elliott wrote, “Tidal waves swept over great tracts of land and left them desolate swamps . . . whole provinces were rendered barren, and remained for generations in an uncultivated and desert condition.”[10] Refugees fled to other lands, particularly Egypt and South America, where they established new colonies modeled after their Atlantic motherland.

The Testimony of Plato

Plato, although by no means the only classical source on Atlantis, is perhaps the most important source of information for the reconstruction of Atlantean geography in the time between the last two cataclysms.

There can be no question as to the Atlantic location of Plato's Atlantis, which he described as an "island" situated "in front of the straits . . . called the Pillars of Heracles." That the Strait of Gibraltar is implied is made fully clear by Plato's comparing the Mediterranean to a "harbor, having only a narrow entrance," as opposed to the "true Ocean" beyond the strait. The island of Atlantis was then "the way to other islands, and from these . . . to the whole of the opposite continent [America?] which surrounded the true ocean."[11]

Much has been written concerning the size and dimensions of Atlantis. According to Plato, it was "larger than Libya and Asia put together," an expression by which he probably meant North Africa and Turkey or Asia Minor combined. The Atlantis of Plato (the Poseidonis of esoteric legends) was certainly a large island, perhaps the size of Western Europe, but by no means a true continent. We know that it possessed abundant natural resources and was particularly rich in metals, including the famous and mysterious orichalcum. The center of the island was occupied by a vast plain, "which is said to have been the fairest of all plains and very fertile." Agriculture was exceptionally developed, and the island possessed an abundant supply of fresh water through lakes, marshes, and rivers. It was covered in forests that were inhabited by a multitude of animals, including elephants. The abundance of black and red stones and the presence of hot water springs further suggest that Poseidonis must have been a volcanic island.

The vast plain that occupied the center of the island was "smooth and even," of an oblong shape, extending in one direction 3,000 stadia (540 kilometers, or 336 miles) and in the other 2,000 stadia (360 kilometers, or 224 miles). To the north, a range of mountains sheltered the plain from the cold northern winds. These mountains were, according to Plato, "celebrated for their number and size and beauty, far beyond any which still exist." The rest of the island was "lofty and precipitous," surrounded by mountains that descended toward the sea on all sides except to the south.

In addition to being exceptionally furnished with a benevolent climate

and natural resources, the island was crossed by a network of canals that cut through the entire plain and collected the water from the many rivers and streams that came down from the mountains. A ditch with a length of 10,000 stadia (1,800 kilometers or 1,120 miles) circled round the plain and met itself near the capital before letting off into the sea. “The depth, and width, and length of this ditch were incredible,” wrote Plato, “and gave the impression that a work of such extent, in addition to so many others, could never have been artificial.”[12] Further inland, more straight canals were cut through the plain at regular intervals of 100 stadia (18 kilometers, or 11 miles), these too being intersected by several smaller ones.

The Testimony of the Classical Authors

There can be little doubt that at the origin of Plato’s account were some genuine ancient sources. While many of these have not survived, a fragment from a poem attributed to Hellanicus of Lesbos, dated to 490 BCE, proves that some version of the story of Atlantis was certainly already circulating in Greece at least a hundred years before the time of Plato.[*17]

Mention of an island of Atlantis is also found in the works of Herodotus (ca. 484–420 BCE).[13]

Marcellus, who wrote a history of Africa likely based on Phoenician sources, similarly spoke of “seven islands in the Atlantic sea, sacred to Proserpine,” which might be the Canaries, and of another “three of immense magnitude, sacred to Pluto, Jupiter and Neptune.”[14] According to this author, the inhabitants of the islands still preserved the memory “of the prodigious magnitude of the Atlantic island . . . and of it governing for many periods all the islands in the Atlantic Sea.”[15]

We will only mention in passing the works of Theopompos of Chios (ca. 400 BCE), in which he described a vast continent beyond the Atlantic, larger than Asia, Europe, and Libya together,[16] and also those of Pliny and Diodorus Siculus, who similarly wrote of a “large island in the Atlantic Ocean beyond the pillars of Hercules . . . several days’ sail from the coast of Africa.”[17]

To these should be added the obvious references contained in the apocryphal *Book of Enoch* to a volcanic land in the West, believed to be the

homeland of the antediluvian Watchers. This land was located near “the great Sea towards the West,” had rivers of fire that discharged into the ocean and possessed high mountains of multicolored rocks reaching up to the sky “like the throne of the Lord.”[18] This land could be the same as the Egyptian Isle of Flames of Iu Neserer, believed to be the birthplace of the god Thoth in the West.

While these accounts are certainly relevant to the question of Atlantis’s existence, they nevertheless add little to our knowledge of Atlantean geography. For this, we will have to turn to the fields of geology and oceanography and to the study of the evolution of the world’s oceans.

A SUNKEN ATLANTIC CONTINENT?

If we exclude the more recent hypotheses of a polar location of Atlantis, either in Greenland or at the South Pole, the Mid-Atlantic Ridge has been the most frequently proposed location for the sunken continent by most Atlantologists.

Drained of the ocean’s waters, the Mid-Atlantic Ridge would appear as a continuous mountain range, comparable in length to the combined Andes and Rocky Mountains of the Americas, with heights comparable to the Himalayas.[19] The present-day Azores, Madeiras, Cape Verde, and Canary Islands represent but the highest peaks of this submerged range.

The ridge is considered a major terrestrial fault line, where the pressure exerted on the terrestrial crust by the rising magma is responsible for the constant rising and sinking of the ocean floor. Extinct river beds, filled with large, smooth river boulders, have been shown to continue underwater for a distance of nearly 300 kilometers (186 miles) off the present south coast of Sao Miguel Island, in the Azores.[20] This evidence is compatible with the sinking of “a large landmass 450 miles across from East to West, and 300 miles from North to South, which left only its mountain peaks showing above the waters . . . which now form the ten islands of the Azores.”[21]

Russian scientist Nikolai Zhirov and Swedish anthropologist René Malaise also took this evidence as indicative of the catastrophic subsidence of the Mid-Atlantic Ridge and the sinking of a vast continental landmass by as many as 3,300 meters (10,827 feet) in the recent geological past. According

to their studies, Atlantis would have been a “basalt continent,” a geological composition quite unlike that of our modern, sialic continents.

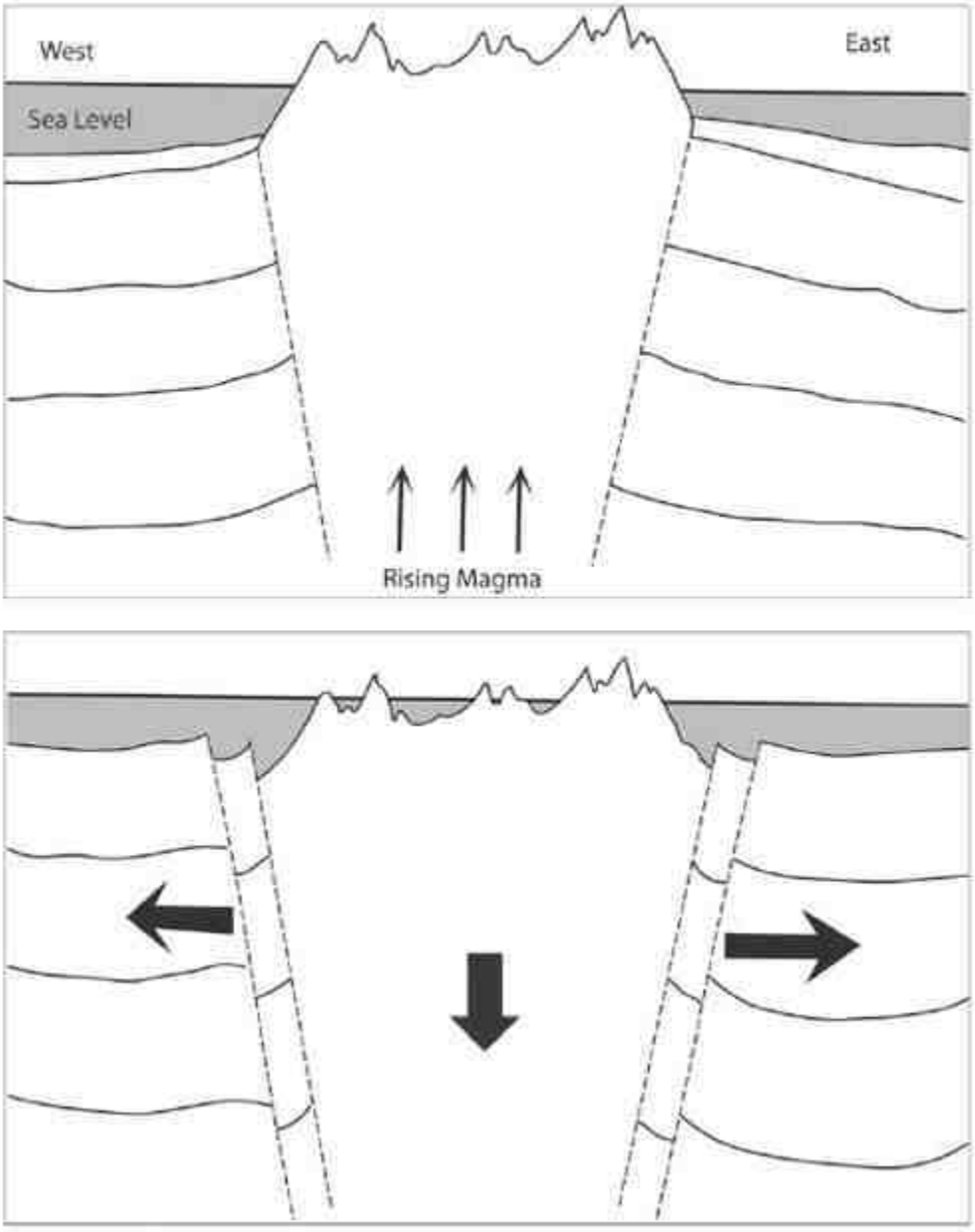

Figure 5.2. The progressive rising and sinking of the Mid-Atlantic Ridge during the Tertiary and Quaternary periods (after O’Brien and O’Brien, 2001).

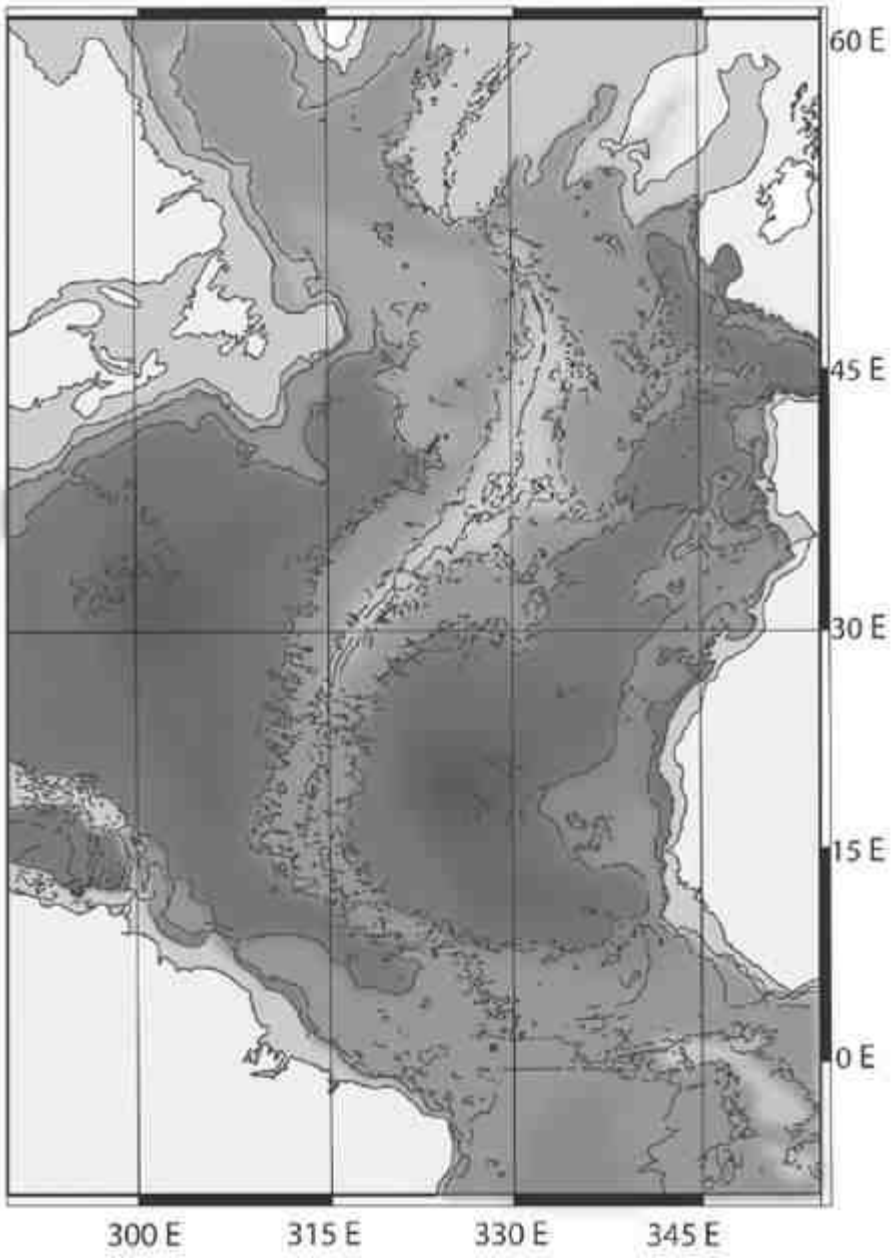

Figure 5.3. Bathymetric chart of the central portion of the Mid-Atlantic Ridge (courtesy of National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration).

According to Zhirov, the emergence of purely basalt structures “is necessarily followed by their subsequent subsidence.” The picture would somehow resemble the following: First, a basalt structure would form on the ocean floor. This would then be pushed upward by the pressure exerted by vast pockets of magma in the underlying mantle. With the passing of

thousands of years, the enormous pressure generated by the rising magma would then cause molten basalt to form beneath the hardened rock surface, which would act as a cap. This would increase seismic stresses to the point when cracks and faults would start forming on the surface. Finally, as pressure underneath it is released, the basalt structure would begin to sink, squeezing more and more molten basalt magma through the cracks toward the ocean floor. “Sooner or later,” observes Zhirov, “hard basalt must sink in liquid basalt.”[22]

The Testimony of Science

In support of his theory, Zhirov presents abundant evidence from various scientific fields for the onetime subaerial existence of the Mid-Atlantic Ridge. Of this, the geological evidence is perhaps the most compelling, including:

- The existence of “terraces” corresponding to ancient shorelines at various depths along the flanks of the Mid-Atlantic Ridge, such as could only have been produced by catastrophic subsidence that occurred in stages, rather than by gradual processes.[23]
- Deepwater sand associated with the remains of land vegetation and freshwater diatoms (unicellular algae), such as could only have been deposited by ancient rivers when the land was still above water or as the result of the sinking of some nearby landmass.[24]
- The discovery of a type of lava called tachylyte, which can only form in the air, on the ocean floor 900 kilometers (559 miles) north of the Azores, at depths exceeding 3,100 meters (3,390 yards).[25]
- Flat-topped guyots and seamounts at varying depths in the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. These are underwater mountains that at one time emerged from the ocean as volcanic islands, but whose summits have now been flattened by wave action over thousands of years.
- The presence of immense submarine canyons, up to hundreds of miles long, representing the beds of ancient rivers that formed at a time when the ocean floor was dry land.
- The anomalous location of the 7,761-meters-deep (4.8 miles) Romanche Trench, bisecting the Mid-Atlantic Ridge just north of the equator.

Similar features usually mark the edge of continental shelves and are thus potentially indicative of the former subaerial existence of a large landmass in the area immediately north or south of the trench.[26]

- Fossilized corals found at depths exceeding 2,500 meters (1.5 miles) along the foothills of the Mid-Atlantic Ridge, of a type known only to grow in relatively shallow waters.[27]
- Several unusual calcareous formations containing pteropodean fossils called “sea biscuits,” which can only have formed under subaerial conditions within the past twelve thousand years, reportedly found at a depth of 732 meters (about one-half mile) on the Atlantis seamount (and notice this name . . .).[28]

No less interesting is the testimony of flora and fauna, including:

- The similarity in the Miocene and Pleistocene epoch’s fauna and flora in Europe and North America, which suggests the existence of a now vanished land bridge between the two continents.
- The presence in North America of typically European varieties of evergreen oak, maple, plane tree, bald cypress, and sequoia.[29] These plant species disappeared altogether from Europe as a consequence of glaciation in the early Pleistocene and are now found exclusively in North America.
- The discovery of at least twenty-five herbal species of transatlantic origin in Scandinavia and the British Isles that are entirely absent from the rest of the European continent.[30]
- The spawning of European eels in the Sargasso Sea, off the coast of North America, which is arguably the result of a change in the pattern of oceanic currents following the sinking of the Mid-Atlantic Ridge.[31]
- The presence of *pteropodean ooze*, which is formed by the remains of animals and other microorganisms that inhabit shallow coastal waters, found at great depths on the submerged Azores plateau and east of Madeira Island.[32]
- The discovery of freshwater diatoms in deep-sea cores taken from what at one time might have been a freshwater lake at a depth of 3,577 meters

(2.2 miles) along the Mid-Atlantic Ridge.[33]

- The anomalous diffusion of the manatee on both sides of the Atlantic and on some of the Atlantic islands. Manatees are known to inhabit the shallow, marshy coastal areas and rivers of the Caribbean, the Gulf of Mexico, and the Amazon. They are also found in West Africa and in some inland lakes and rivers. Manatees tend to prefer freshwater habitats and warm, tropical seas where large seagrass beds exist. Their presence in modern times has not been documented in open oceanic waters more than 75 kilometers (47 miles) offshore. Yet manatee sightings were once common on the remote island of St. Helena, 4,000 kilometers (2,485 miles) east of Rio de Janeiro and 2,000 kilometers (1,243 miles) off the coast of Africa. The former existence of land in the region of the Mid-Atlantic Ridge appears to be the sole logical explanation for the present distribution and range of the manatee.

Finally, one last set of evidence is offered by the relationship between oceanic currents, climate, and glaciation in the Northern Hemisphere.

- The discovery of fossil foraminifera (small, single-celled organisms possessing an external calcium carbonate shell) of the warmthloving kind at extreme northern latitudes in the West Atlantic and the parallel discovery of cold-loving foraminifera as far south as the equator along the coast of Africa, confirming the onetime subaerial existence of the Mid-Atlantic Ridge acting as a barrier to the warm Gulf Stream. In the West, this barrier would have pushed the Gulf Stream farther north up to the coasts of Greenland and Labrador, which were then entirely ice-free. At the same time, without the mitigating effect of the Gulf Stream on the climate, much of northern and western Europe would have been under the grip of glaciation. It was the sinking of Atlantis that reopened thermohaline circulation in the North Atlantic and thus brought the Ice Age to an end.[34]
- Moreover, the anomalous salinity and water temperature of the ocean in the region of the Mid-Atlantic Ridge may be explained as the result of evaporation at a time when seawater penetrated into the (then still subaerial) median valley before its subsidence. These highly saline waters remained trapped at great depths at the bottom of the median

valley, where they are still found today. Radiocarbon dates show that the waters in this portion of the ridge are several thousands of years old.[35]

All this evidence stands to demonstrate the likely existence of a now submerged continental landmass in the region of the Mid-Atlantic Ridge that apparently sank in stages over several thousands of years in the same approximate area suggested by the esoteric tradition.

A TENTATIVE RECONSTRUCTION OF ATLANTIS

Any attempt to reconstruct the form and shape of Atlantis, however tentative, would face almost insurmountable challenges. The sinking of Atlantis was far from being a uniform process, with certain areas sinking deeper and more suddenly than others and vast portions of land surviving above water for a considerable time afterward.

According to Zhirov, Atlantis had its largest landmass in the Pliocene epoch (5.3 to 2.6 million years ago). It then sank gradually during the Pleistocene epoch and might have survived in the form of a relatively small island until the European Bronze Age, about 1200 BCE.

It is particularly interesting in the light of the testimony of the esoteric tradition that Zhirov would picture Pleistocene-epoch Atlantis as consisting of two main islands, which he calls Poseidonis and Antilia, separated by a narrow strait around latitude 31° north. A further island group, called the Equatorial Archipelago, may have existed south of Antilia, between latitudes 5° north and 10° north.

The particular form and extension of Atlantis would have caused a large variety of climates to arise on each of the different islands. Antilia likely had a tropical climate, while Poseidonis must have been at least partially under glaciers. Much of the northern area of Poseidonis would have been occupied by a large and level plateau, sheltered to the north by the peaks of the present-day Azores, towering 4,000 to 5,000 meters (2.5 to 3.1 miles) above it. To the west it would have been bordered by the MidAtlantic Ridge and to the south by a chain of what are now low underwater hills and seamounts

curiously named by modern oceanographers Atlantis, Plato, Cruiser, and Great Meteor. The general measurements of this plateau, 400 by 600 kilometers (248 by 373 miles), fit very well with the figures provided by Plato for his Atlantean plain.[36]

ISLANDS OF THE OCEAN SEA

If Zhirov is indeed correct and the subsidence of Atlantis spanned several thousands of years, being at times very gradual, at others catastrophic, then it is possible that valuable pieces of information useful for a reconstruction of Atlantean geography would have been preserved in the descriptions left by ancient geographers concerning phantom islands in the Atlantic.

Among those recorded by the classical authors were Ogygia, Scheria, Thule, Tartessos, the Cassiterides (or “Tin Islands”), the Gorgades (or Gorgones), and the Isles of the Blest. Their memory survived into the Middle Ages in the islands of Antilia, Hy-Brazil, the Island of the Seven Cities, St. Brendan´s Island, Green Island, Bouss, Virgin Island, Ys, Lyoness, and Mayda. In the extreme north, the large phantom islands of Ikaria, Estotiland, and Frisland would still be prominently featured on nautical charts well into the Age of Discoveries.

A thorough study of these cartographic phantoms reveals that, far from being mere figments of the imagination of the ancient cartographers, some of these islands may have actually existed above water in the not too distant past in the proximity of now submerged seamounts and other seafloor anomalies.

The famous Cassiterides, or Tin Islands, were located in an area that recent oceanographic data shows was once dry land near the present-day Great and Little Salt Banks, to the west of Cape Finisterre, Spain, where bedding depths of between 65 and 20 meters (213 and 65 feet) have been reported. These islands were visited by the Roman general Publius Crassus in 96 BCE and were later mentioned by Pliny (23–79 CE) and Strabo (64 BCE–24 CE).

Off the mainland of Africa, another group of islands, the Gorgades, may be identified with the Canary or Cape Verde Islands, said to be located a mere two days’ sail from the coast. From these, a ship could keep a westerly course “past Mount Atlas” to another group of islands called the Hesperides,

sacred to the “Ladies of the West.” The length of the journey from the Gorgades to the Hesperides was given by Statius Sebosus as forty days’ sail, indicating that these islands certainly belonged in the open ocean.[37] It follows that the legendary Mount Atlas must have been found on an island somewhere between, perhaps the one called Atlantis by Pliny.[38]

Immediately outside the Pillars of Hercules, in the same approximate location as Plato’s Atlantis, Pseudo-Aristotle described a desert island possessing an abundance of wood of all kinds and navigable rivers. The island was said to have been discovered by Carthaginian sailors, and while the approximate location seems to match that of Madeira, that island does not possess navigable rivers, unless its territory was much larger in antiquity.

A people called the Atlantoi were said by Diodorus Siculus to inhabit the island of Cerne, which Pseudo-Scylax situated at a distance of twelve days’ sail from the Pillars of Hercules. Diodorus Siculus’s Atlantoi were a highly civilized race, living in a prosperous country and possessing great cities. Among them, mythology placed the birth of the gods, and they were said to inhabit also “the regions [America?] which lie along the shores of the Ocean.”[39]

Pseudo-Scylax further described the sea beyond the island of Cerne as impassable “because of shoals, mud and seaweed,” in a way that closely resembles Plato’s description of the Atlantic after the sinking of the island of Atlantis. According to Pseudo-Aristotle, this shoal hindered navigation from a point four days’ sail from the port of Gadir,[40] and it may have existed as late as the twelfth century CE, when Honorius of Autun wrote of the “curdled sea” that adjoins the Hesperides and “covers the site of the lost Atlantis, which lay west from Gibraltar.”[41]

There, near the “impassable sea,” Plutarch situated the island of Ogygya, where the nymph Calypso, herself called Atlantis by the Greeks (Ατλαντις or “daughter of Atlas”), was imprisoned. This island was said to lie close to the “navel of the Sea,” five days’ sail to the west of Britain.[42] Two more islands, sacred to Cronus and Poseidon, were said to exist at an equal distance from Ogygya. Beyond these, at a distance of 5,000 stadia (900 kilometers or 560 miles), stretched the “great continent” (perhaps America?) that encircled the ocean on the opposite side.[43]

Scheria, or Phaeacia, was yet another island in the Atlantic visited by

Ulysses after escaping from Ogygya. It was a land of shadowy mountains, looking like a shield in the misty deeps.[44] It was inhabited by the Phaeacians, a dark-skinned seafaring race who still preserved the memory of their former homeland of Hyperia, a land "of broad, open plains," from which they had been relocated to Scheria by their father, Poseidon, "farthermost of men . . . in the wash of the waves." They were the best sailors in the world and possessed fabulously swift ships that could be controlled by thought.[45] The description of the royal citadel of the Phaeacians echoes in many aspects that of Plato's Atlantean city and gardens: the walls were of bronze "shining like the sun." Statues of gold and silver flanked the doors of the palace, which were also made of gold. Within the walls, beautiful gardens offered all kinds of fruits year-round.

Scheria may have been among the last portions of Poseidonis to be submerged, if we are to believe Homer's statement that Minoan sailors visited it during the third or second millennium BCE. Its destruction would have occurred shortly after Ulysses's visit, after Poseidon decided to punish the impious Phaeacians by turning their ships into stone and burying their city under a mountain.[46]

This brief excursus would not be complete without mention of the island of Thule, which was described in the fourth century BCE by Pytheas of Massilia as lying at a distance of six days' sail to the north of Britain. Despite its northern location, Thule enjoyed a mild climate, which allowed crops and fruits to grow in abundance. According to Hecateus of Abdera, who called it Hyperborea, it was an island "no smaller than Sicily," which contained moreover a great circular temple of Apollo.[47] According to Zhirov, Thule may have existed somewhere in the vicinity of the Faroe Plateau, in the middle of a great warm marine current.[48] It may have been home to the legendary Túatha dé Danann of Irish folklore, a supernatural race versed in "druidry, heathenism and diabolical knowledge," said to have come to Ireland on dark clouds from the northern islands of the world during ancient times.[49]

MYSTERY OF THE PORTOLAN MAPS

Over the course of the thirteenth century CE, some very sophisticated

maritime charts known as portolans started to appear in Europe, showing portions of the Mediterranean, the Black Sea, and the Atlantic coast of Europe and North Africa with a precision never before seen in the maps of the time. The origins of the portolan charts are shrouded in mystery, with numerous elements suggesting they were in fact but copies of much older maps. Exactly *how old*, however, may forever remain a matter of speculation. The earliest portolans may thus have shown the world not as it appeared in the Middle Ages, when the surviving copies were made, but as it looked at the time when the source maps were drawn, perhaps hundreds or thousands of years earlier.

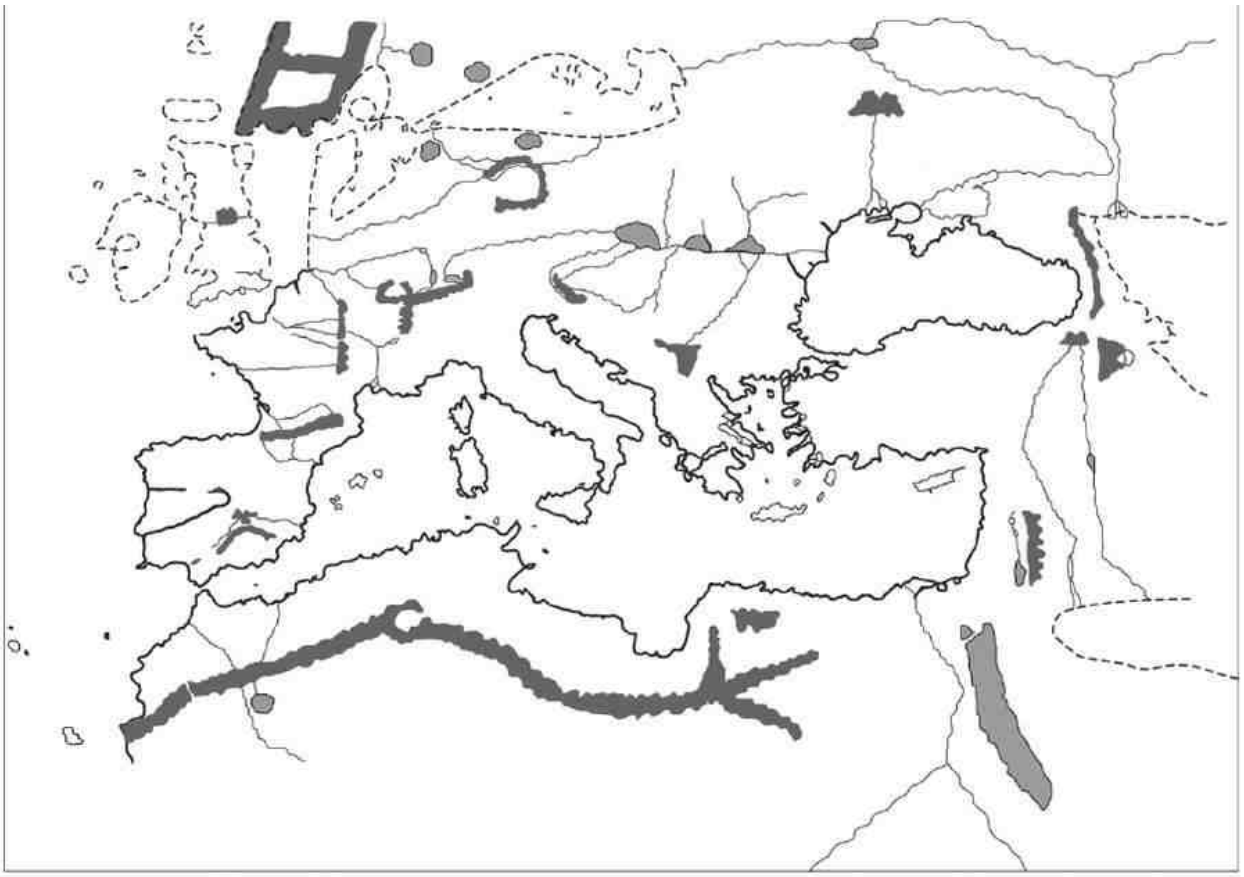

Figure 5.4. Tracing of the Dulcert Portolano of 1339 (after Nicolai, 2015). The dashed coastlines indicate the area outside the accurate core area of the chart. Paris, Bibliotheque National de France.

Later portolans exhibit little or no evolution from the first

thirteenthcentury examples. With the exception of minor stylistic improvements that added little to the accuracy of the maps themselves, thirteenth-century portolans were as good as, if not better than, those drawn through the end of the sixteenth century.[50] A. E. Nordenskiöld, a well-known authority in medieval cartography, called the now lost original on which all later portolan charts were based the "normal Portolano," speculating that it must have originated in remote antiquity and somehow made its way into medieval Europe, perhaps through Venice or Constantinople.[51]

A more recent look at the problem of the origin of the portolan charts has been offered by Roel Nicolai of Utrecht University. Applying statistical methods to the analysis of portolan charts, Nicolai was able to confirm Nordenskiöld's original intuition that the cartographic tradition expressed by these maps cannot possibly be medieval.[52] His hypothesis rests on the fact that, unlike what was traditionally assumed, portolan charts are *not* projectionless. Instead, they appear to be based on a form of Mercator projection that was unknown to scholars of the Middle Ages and was not introduced in Europe until late in the sixteenth century. To put it succinctly, their construction would have been "well beyond the capabilities of cartographers from either medieval Europe or the Arabic-Islamic world."[53]

This leaves open the possibility that a different type of projection from Mercators could have been used for the construction of portolan charts, namely the *equirectangular* projection. Indeed, according to Nicolai, it would be almost impossible to distinguish an equirectangular projection from a Mercator's projection for an area the size of the Mediterranean on a plane chart. Only one map from antiquity is known to have used a form of equirectangular projection, and this is the map of Marinus of Tyre.[*18] This remarkable map, likely of Phoenician origin, was mentioned in the writings of Ptolemy, and it probably still existed in the tenth century CE, when it was described by the Arab geographer Al-Mas'udi as "far superior to Ptolemy's."[54] At the same time, Nicolai recognizes that in order to produce a map with the accuracy displayed by the portolan charts, some very complex latitude-dependent corrections would have had to be made, not only to distances but also to compass directions. These corrections would have been of a kind "so impractical that the relevant formulas cannot be found in modern geodesy textbooks."[55]

It is extremely unlikely that the Greeks, Phoenicians, or any other ancient

civilization would have possessed the required knowledge and instrumentation to build a chart of this level of accuracy and complexity. Yet the question of the origin of the portolan charts only gets more mysterious if one considers the numerous hints at glacial and even preglacial topography contained in the maps.

TERRA INCOGNITA

The Piri Reis map of 1513 is perhaps the better known of a number of maps allegedly containing "out-of-place" geographic knowledge. In his 1966 book *Maps of the Ancient Sea Kings,* Charles Hapgood was among the first Western scholars to suggest that the map contained geographic information of the coasts of South America and Antarctica that could not have been available to cartographers of the early sixteenth century. Moreover, similar to Nicolai, Hapgood took the map's complex trigonometric projection as evidence of its ancient origin. Hapgood wrote, "The trigonometry of the projection suggests the work of Alexandrian geographers . . . but the evident knowledge of longitude implies a people unknown to us, a nation of seafarers, with instruments for finding longitude undreamed of by the Greeks, and, so far as we know, not possessed by the Phoenicians, either."[56]

The unglaciated profile of the Antarctic continent shows with remarkable accuracy on the Piri Reis map of 1513, as well as on the 1531 map of Oronteus Finaeus and in Mercator's cartographic atlas of 1569, complete with details of coastal rivers and mountains whose existence would not be confirmed for at least another four hundred years.[57]

A similar enigma is posed by the Zeno map of 1380, which displays the entire coastal profile of Greenland with no ice cap.[*19] Also in this case, Hapgood observed that "the latitudes and longitudes of many places scattered all over the map are amazingly correct."[58]

Figure 5.5. Tracing of the Piri Reis map of 1513 (after Hapgood, 1966).

Yet another map, composed by the Arab geographer Hadji Ahmed in 1559, most likely from an earlier Venetian chart, shows the complete coastline of North and South America, such as it would not be charted for at least another hundred years, including a land bridge connecting North

America to Asia in the region of the Bering Strait, which disappeared over eleven thousand years ago.

More hints to the survival of a prehistoric topography on medieval and early modern maps are offered by the many phantom islands whose locations closely match those of known submarine features that were certainly above water during the last ice age and are now below sea level.

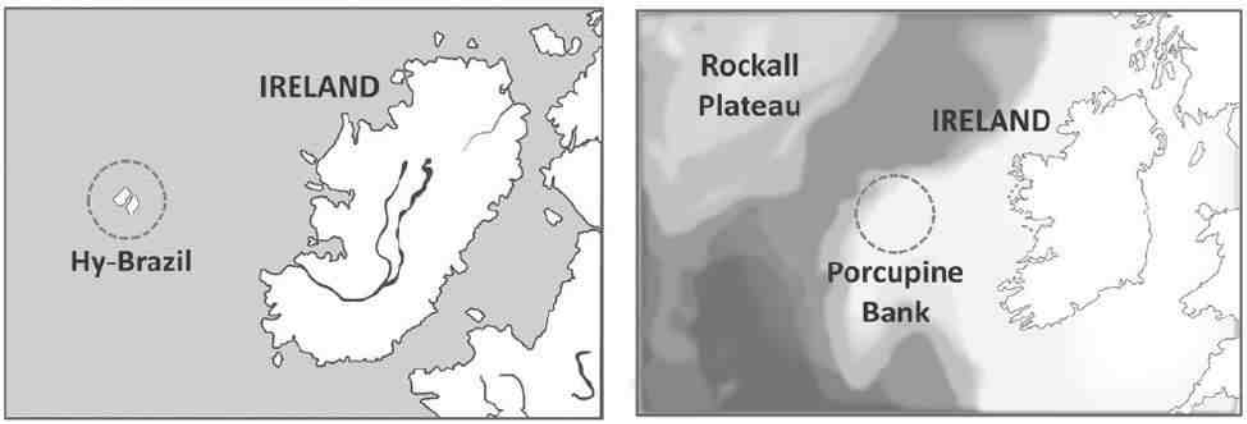

Figure 5.6. The location of Hy-Brazil to the west of Ireland according to the 1325 map of Angelino Dalorto (left). Compare this with a modern seafloor chart showing the submerged Porcupine Bank and Rockall Plateau (right).

The crescent-shaped island of Mayda and the more famous Hy-Brazil appear already on the Dulcert Portolano of 1339 and on the Catalan Atlas of 1375, occupying the same location off the coast of Ireland where a large shoal known as Porcupine Bank is known to exist at depths of less than 150 meters (492 feet).

An even larger landmass called Frisland, surrounded by numerous smaller islands, features prominently to the south of Iceland on the Zeno map of 1380. Its location coincides with remarkable accuracy with that of the submerged Rockall Plateau. The tiny, uninhabited Rockall Island, located 430 kilometers (267 miles) northeast of Ireland, is the only portion still above water of this now submerged plateau, whose largest part now lies at depths of between 300 and 400 meters (328 and 437 yards). The position of the smaller island of Dund, located to the north of Frisland, from which it is separated by a narrow strait, also remarkably coincides with that of the submerged George

Bligh Bank, where depths of between 400 and 500 meters (437 and 547 yards) have been recorded. Its highest peak lies at a depth of just 77 meters (84 yards), and it would certainly have been an island during the last ice age. Two more islands, called Neome and Podalida, both located to the east of the main island of Frisland in the direction of Scotland, would have occupied the same locations as the underwater Rosemary Bank and Anton Dohrn Seamount.

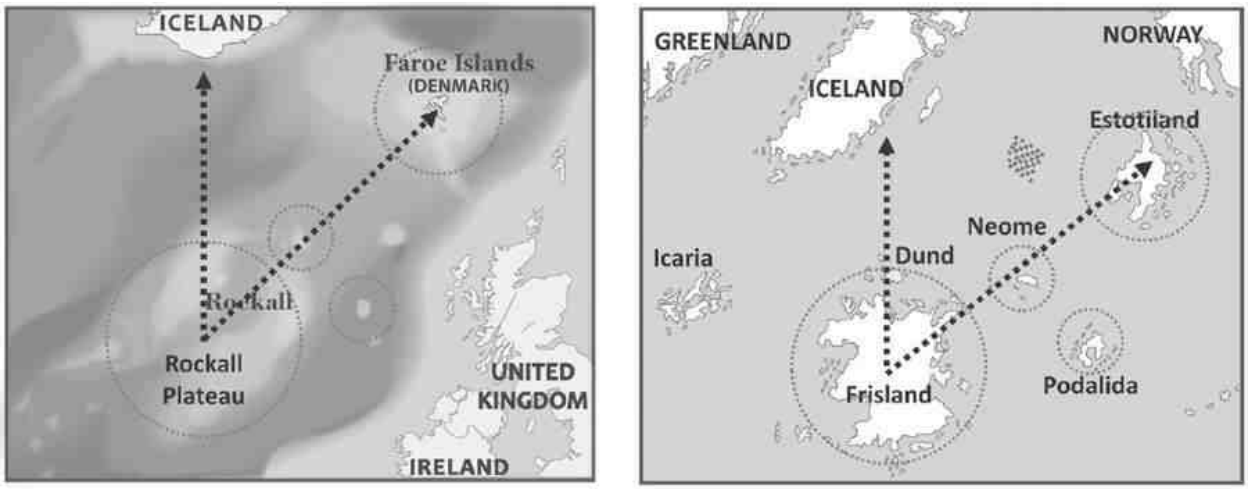

Figure 5.7. Bathymetric chart showing the location of the submerged Rockall and Faroe Plateaus (left). Compare this with a tracing of the Zeno map showing various phantom islands in approximately the same position (right).

The other large phantom island of Icaria, depicted on the Zeno map, would have been located on a continuation of the submerged Reykjanes Ridge to the south of Iceland, whose summits lie at depths of less than 500 meters (547 yards). Another landmass called Estotiland could be identified with the tip of the Labrador Peninsula, whereas Drogeo appears to have been an island roughly the size of Ireland off the coast of Labrador, where depths of as little as 50 to 70 meters (164 to 229 feet) have been measured on the Grand Banks of Newfoundland.

On the Mercator map of 1569, a group of four large islands are shown off the east coast of Brazil, called Ascension, Trinidad, Santa Maria, and Minuaes. Today, only one of these islands actually appears above sea level, forming part of the archipelago of Trinidade and Martin Vaz.[59] The other

“islands” are in fact underwater seamounts, which would have been last seen above water in 8000 BCE.

North of these, the Piri Reis map of 1513 displays one large island and a smaller one where no such islands are known to exist. According to Hapgood, “The big island is located right over the MidAtlantic Ridge, at the spot where the Rocks of St Peter and Paul, jut up above the sea.”[60]

The same island also appears on the Buache map of 1737, which moreover shows a land bridge between the Canary Islands and the coast of Africa, such as could have only existed during the last ice age, together with another large island in the same approximate location as the submerged Sierra Leone rise.

Another phantom island called Antilia shows prominently in the 1367 Pizzigano map, in approximately the same position where the Azores would later be discovered. A curious legend on the map apparently refers to statues set on this island as a warning to sailors against the impassable sea that lay ahead.[*20] The same island appears again in yet another Pizzigano map of 1424 as a rectangular landmass oriented approximately north-south and measuring some 450 by 150 kilometers (280 by 93 miles). According to Fray Angel Ortega’s *Historia de la Rabida*, legends of the existence of Antilia were common knowledge among the sailors of Palos. It might have been the same island described by Pseudo-Aristotle in *De Mirabilibus Auscultationibus* as lying outside of the Pillars of Hercules and possessing an abundance of wood of all kinds and navigable rivers.

Farther to the west, the submerged topography of the Atlantic floor closely echoes Proclus’s description of three Atlantic islands “of immense extent” that were sacred to Pluto, Jupiter, and Neptune (perhaps identifiable as Cuba, Haiti, and the now submerged Great Bahama Bank), thus adding even more credibility to the hypothesis that Antilia was itself a remnant or cartographic phantom of the Atlantis of Plato or the Poseidonis of esoteric legends, located in the region of the present-day Azores.

A SUMMARY OF ATLANTEAN GEOGRAPHY

The studies and conclusions of Zhirov and Malaise on the geological history of Atlantis appear to be in substantial agreement with the esoteric tradition and with the cartographic hints to a preglacial topography preserved in several highly enigmatic medieval and early modern maps.

From the analysis of all the available sources, the following picture emerges:

- Atlantis was a basalt continent located in the region of the MidAtlantic Ridge and primarily connected to Europe, Africa, and North America by temporary land bridges.
- Atlantis had its greatest territorial extension during the Miocene epoch (23 to 5.3 million years ago), when it formed an almost continuous landmass stretching from the northern continents of Appalachia and Fennoscandia to the southern tip of Africa.
- Over the course of the Pliocene epoch (5.3 to 2.6 million years ago) and for much of the Pleistocene epoch (2.6 million to 11,700 years ago), Atlantis existed as two separate islands—a northern island (Ruta or Poseidonis), perhaps still connected to Europe and North America by means of a land bridge to the north, and a southern island (Daitya)—as well as the Equatorial Archipelago.
- The general direction of the subsidence of land in the Atlantic must have been from south to north. The Equatorial Archipelago and the southern island of Daitya sank first.
- The northern island of Poseidonis still existed as a sizable landmass until the last ice age, when it sank as a result of tectonic movements and a general rise in global sea levels. The Azores and Madeiras are some of the last portions of the Atlantean mainland that are still above water. The area occupied by these island groups must have been much larger in antiquity. Forests and navigable rivers still existed on Madeira as late as the European Bronze Age (4000–2000 BCE). The Homeric islands of Scheria and Ogygia and the medieval Antilia, all located in the same region, may have been among the last remnants of Poseidonis above water.[61]
- Farther north, the vast submerged Rockall Plateau may be identified with the classical island of Thule and with the Frisland of medieval and early modern maps. A large number of smaller islands appears to have

sunk in the same region of the North Atlantic within historical times. These include the islands of Hy-Brazil and Mayda, located on the now submerged Porcupine Bank, and Icaria, in the region of the Reykjanes Ridge.

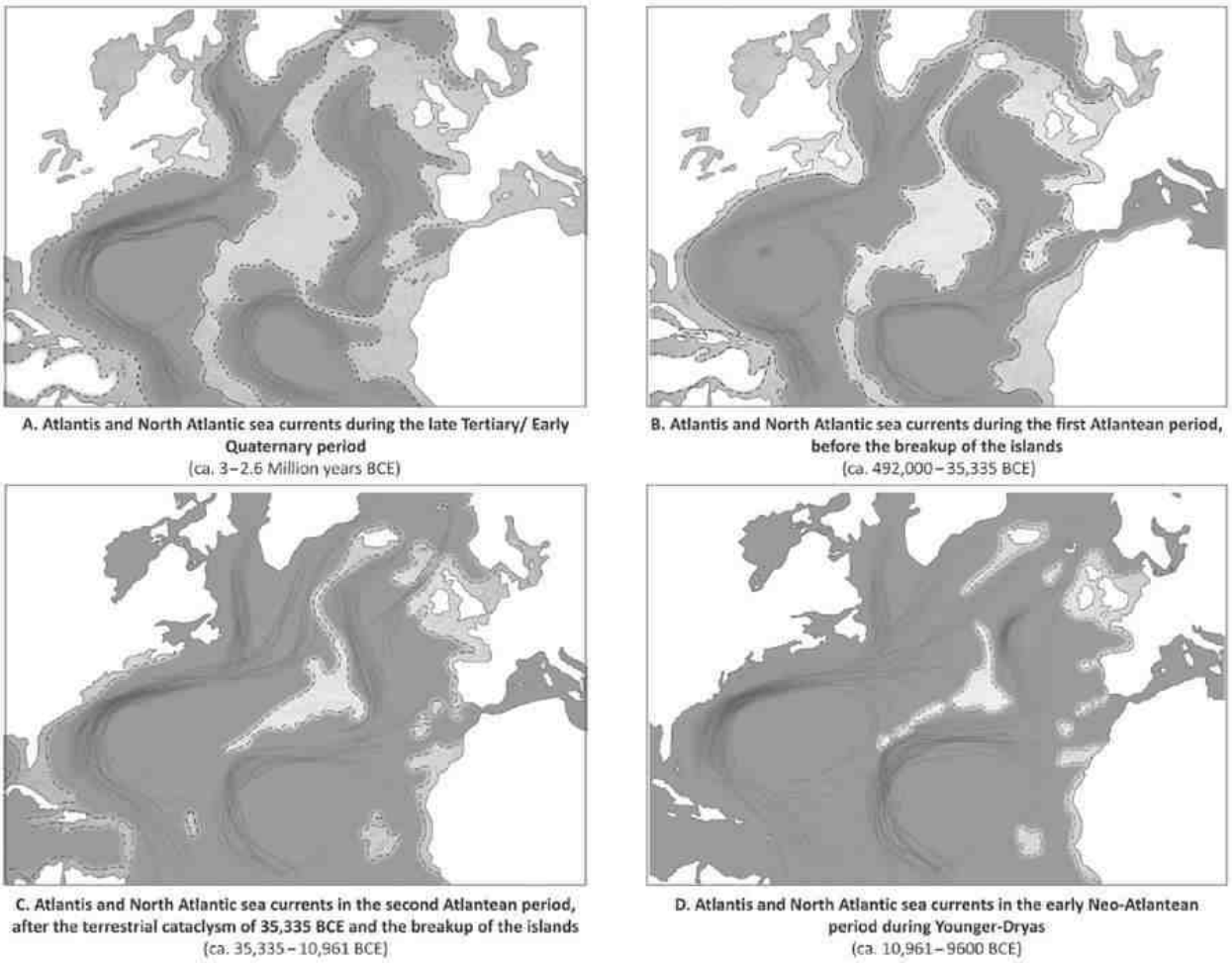
A. Atlantis and North Atlantic sea currents during the late Tertiary/ Early Quaternary period
(ca. 3–2.6 Million years BCE)
B. Atlantis and North Atlantic sea currents during the first Atlantean period, before the breakup of the islands
(ca. 492,000–35,335 BCE)
C. Atlantis and North Atlantic sea currents in the second Atlantean period, after the terrestrial cataclysm of 35,335 BCE and the breakup of the islands
(ca. 35,335–10,961 BCE)
D. Atlantis and North Atlantic sea currents in the early Neo-Atlantean period during Younger-Dryas
(ca. 10,961–9600 BCE)

Figure 5.8. Hypothetical reconstruction of Atlantis and North Atlantic sea currents (after Malaise, 1951, and Zhirov, 1970).

- The rising and subsidence of land in the North Atlantic continues to this day, with the geologically recent formation of Iceland being perhaps the clearest example of new land creation along the Mid-Atlantic Ridge.[62]

Figure 5.8 shows a reconstruction of Atlantis and the main North Atlantic sea currents. This reconstruction, however tentative, shows nevertheless the complexity and immense timescale of the geological history of Atlantis. It

also provides a fundamental backdrop for the decipherment of many of the enigmas related to the rise and fall of Atlantean civilization.

THE CITY OF THE GOLDEN GATES

Even outside of the esoteric tradition, Plato is by no means the only source to offer a glimpse into the nature of Atlantean civilization between the two cataclysms. The Hindu Puranas and the Bible also contain numerous references to a great island empire that was destroyed and sank in the Western Ocean on account of the depravity of its inhabitants.

Building Heaven on Earth

Plato's description of the capital city of Atlantis matches in nearly every aspect the esoteric descriptions of the great "City of the Golden Gates" as it existed during the late Atlantean period on the northern island of Poseidonis.

According to Plato, the city, which he called Basileia (Royal City), was located on the southern shore of the island and was connected to the sea by an immense canal. The city had a circular shape, consisting of three concentric rings separated by moats. The inner citadel had a diameter of 27 stades (about 5 kilometers or 3 miles), but the whole area encircled by walls measured 127 stades (23 kilometers or 14 miles) across. This would have made Basileia a city about twice the size of imperial Rome. In the central island stood the palace of the kings, "a marvel to behold for size and beauty," and the main Atlantean temple, "of outlandish appearance." The outer city wall was covered in brass, the second in tin, while the third, encompassing the citadel, "flashed with the red light of Orichalcum."[63]

The main material used for construction was the local stone, which came naturally in white, black, and red colors. Great shipyards and docks were built underground below each one of the rings of land that formed the inner city, "having roofs formed out of the native rock." The canals themselves were covered in places, on account of the immense height that the banks reached above the water.

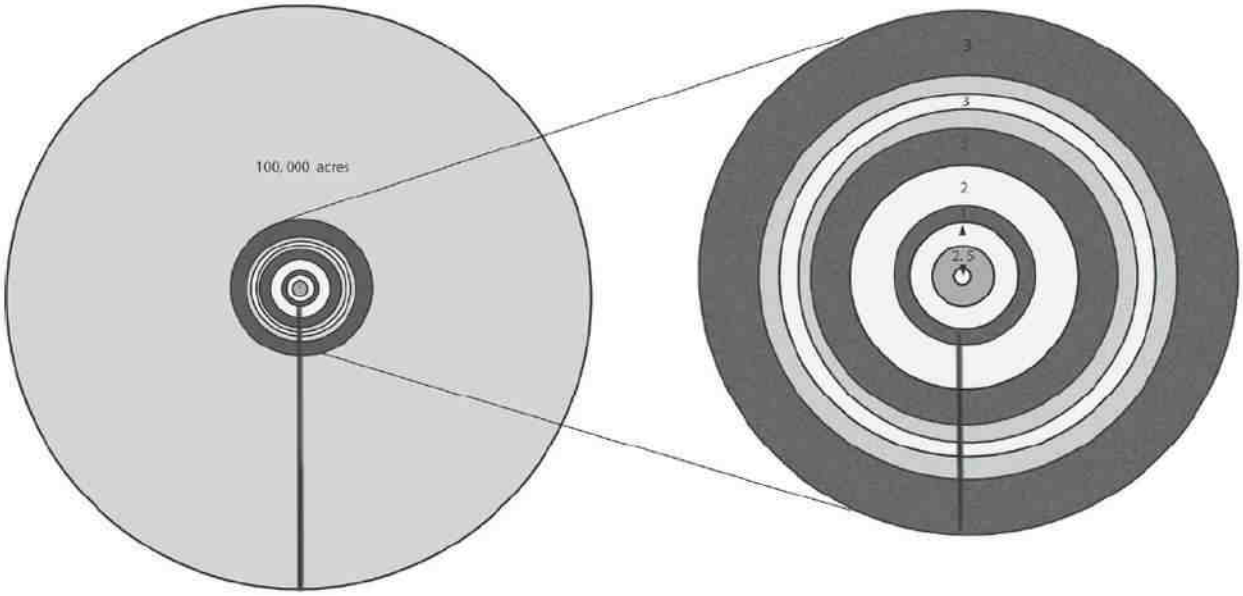

Figure 5.9. Diagram of the inner city of Atlantis (after Plato's *Timaeus* and *Critias*). The measurements of the inner citadel (right) are given in stades, showing concentric rings of land (white) and water (dark gray). The inner city was connected to the sea by means of a canal and surrounded by an outer wall encompassing an area of about 100,000 acres (left).

The city itself was equipped with all sorts of comforts and delights, for it had fountains of cold and hot water, public baths, gardens, and places of exercise for men and women. It also possessed countless bridges and aqueducts, temples dedicated to all the different gods, and even a racecourse or hippodrome. In the words of Plato, it possessed "such an amount of wealth as was never before possessed by kings and potentates, and is not likely ever to be again." The few things that the city itself and the island did not provide "were brought to them from foreign countries, on account of the greatness of their empire."[64]

The Atlantean temples were, according to Scott-Elliott, "massive structures of gigantic proportions," somehow resembling the great halls of the temples of Egypt, but built "on a still more stupendous scale."[65] The occult text known as *The Stanzas of Dzyan* also contains numerous references to the construction materials employed by the Atlanteans. There we are told, "They [the Atlanteans] built huge cities . . . of rare earths and metals they built, out of the fires vomited, out of the white stone of the mountains and the black

stone [of the subterranean fires], they cut their own images, in their size and likeness, and worshipped them."[66]

According to the American psychic Edgar Cayce, the main Atlantean temple, called the Incalathon, was in the shape of an immense pyramid and served as both a repository of knowledge and a hall of initiation. It contained a crystal, or firestone, used to concentrate the rays of the sun to power all kinds of vehicles and technological appliances—something reminiscent of a Tesla tower.[67]

The key dimensions of the Atlantean temple and of the entire city were certainly inspired by the canons of sacred geometry. In *How the World Is Made*, John Michell and Allan Brown provide the key to the geometric design of the Atlantean capital. To Michell and Brown, Plato's Atlantis was "a monstrous exercise in pentagonal geometry . . . the most extraordinary geometric structure that anyone has ever dreamt up."[68] The city it produced was magnificent, far richer and more populous than any other, but it was also fundamentally flawed. The ringed city, in all its pentagonal glory, could never free itself from its human and terrestrial origins. No matter how glorious and magnificent it appeared to those "who had no eye to see the true virtue," it would always be a pale reflection, an inferior copy of the Heavenly City. It was the mortal element, exemplified in Plato's allegory by the numbers 5 and 10, that led Atlantis to its doom.[69] The number 5 was preferred to the sacred 12, on which Plato's Heavenly City was rather founded. The result was an imperfect squaring of the circle. To Michell and Brown, this was proof that Plato's account of Atlantis should not be taken at face value, but as an allegory, like the biblical Tower of Babel, of humanity's failed attempt to build the Heavenly City on Earth.

Tripura and the War on the Asuras in the Vedas

The Hindu Puranas bear witness to the existence of an Atlantean tradition independent from the one that inspired Plato's *Timaeus* and *Critias.* The *Vishnu Purana,* whose composition may date to the first millennium BCE, speaks of Sveta-Dwipa, the "White Island," as one of the seven Dwipas, or island-continents of the world. This island, also called Atala in Vedic cosmology, was said to lie "in the Western Ocean" and to contain "magnificent palaces . . . beautiful groves and streams and lakes where the

lotus grows."[70] It was the abode of many divine races, among which were those of the Dánavas, the Daityas, and the Yakshas. It was only much later that Atala became identified with a hell or an underworld—a land of the departed in the far west that sank at the bottom of the ocean after a horrendous war.[71]

Perhaps the most striking similarity to Plato's account lies in the description of the capital city of Atala, Tripura, which was known as the "Triple City." It was the work of the great Asura Maya, the architect of the gods, and was a city of prosperity and power, expressing dominance over the world. Just like Plato's Atlantis, it comprised three different rings—the lowest with walls of iron, the middle with walls of silver, and the third with walls of gold.

Similar to Plato's Atlanteans, when the divine element in the Asuras weakened and their human traits became more prevalent, they began to act unseemly and endeavored to subdue the whole world. Thus, we read in the Mahabharata that "those Daitya kings . . . stupefied by covetousness and folly . . . began to shamelessly exterminate the cities and towns established all over the universe. Filled with pride . . . the wicked Danavas ceased to show any respect for the gods."[72]

Following these events, the Santi Parva informs us that a gathering of the gods took place, in which it was decided that Tripura and all the evil Asuras must be destroyed. The god Shiva was to strike the Triple City from his powerful Vimana (a flying chariot) with a single arrow, a weapon of "fierce and irresistible wrath . . . burning with the unbearable fire of anger," in the precise moment when its three rings were aligned.

In an instant, the fate of Tripura was consumed. Drawing his celestial bow, Shiva "sped that shaft which represented the might of the whole universe at the triple city Burning those Asuras, he threw them down into the Western ocean."[73]

The description of the fiery chariot and Shiva's actions echoes in many ways that of the fall of Phaeton given by Plato, and it is repeated almost verbatim in the biblical account of the book of Revelation.

The Fall of the Great Babylon

In the biblical allegory, Babylon and Tyre take the place of the condemned city of Atlantis. The memory of past cataclysms turns into a prophecy and an admonition for the future.

Thus, in the book of Revelation, an angel invites the prophet to witness the fate of the Great Babylon, "the great harlot . . . who sits upon many waters." The city had "seven heads," being the hills (islands?) on which she sat, and "ten horns," being her ten kings, who "dominate all the kings of the Earth."[74] It was the capital of a great maritime empire, through which "all who had ships in the sea were made prosperous." Among its riches were "gold and silver and precious stones . . . pearls, fine linen, purple silks and scarlet," as well as "every kind of fragrant wood" and "all fine workmanship of ivory . . . all the beautiful things made of costly wood, of brass, iron and marble"[75]; in other terms, all the same products of which Plato's Atlantis was said to be equally rich before its fall. Just as with Plato's Atlantis, moreover, "Her iniquity rose to Heaven, where God knew of her sins. . . . Therefore, He said, her plagues shall come in a single day."[76]

The agent of the destruction of Atlantis-Babylon, according to Revelation, was a "star from heaven . . . a great fiery dragon," which "fell into the Ocean . . . all aflame, like a great lamp."[77] Its tail "obscured a third part of the stars, which began to fall toward Earth," causing "all the mountains and islands" to be " jolted from their proper places."[78] After this, we read, "The great city fell into three parts, and the cities of the other nations collapsed. . . . . All the islands vanished, and their mountains were gone."[79]

The parallels between the fall of the Great Babylon in the book of Revelation and Plato's Atlantis are even too obvious. As a man conversant in Greek, the author of Revelation would have certainly known Plato's works. There is, however, also a more obvious Old Testament parallel for this account. The book of Ezekiel, which dates to the time of the Babylonian captivity (593–571 BCE), contains, in fact, a very similar prophecy of the fall of the Phoenician city of Tyre: "Out in the sea you will become a place to spread fishnets. . . . [80] You were a power on the seas. . . . Now the coastlands tremble on the day of your fall; the Islands in the sea are terrified at your collapse."[81]

The fate of Tyre, says the book of Ezekiel, will be like that of the "people

of long ago," whom God had cast "down to the pit . . . in the earth below." In the same way, God will make Tyre "a desolate city . . . like cities no longer inhabited" and will bring "the ocean depths . . . and its vast waters" over it, so that Tyre "will be no more." It "will be sought . . . but never be found again."[82] Its doom shall come "from the midst of the stones of fire."[83]

Tyre and Atlantis are both described as fabulously wealthy cities, the seats of great maritime powers "in the hearth of the seas."[84] Like Atlantis, Tyre was said to have "corrupted [its] wisdom by reason of [its] splendor."[85] According to Ezekiel, the kings of Tyre had become violent and corrupt on account of their wealth, and in their arrogance, they thought themselves equal to God. "I am a god," says the king of Tyre in Ezekiel 28:2. "I sit on the throne of a god in the heart of the seas. But you are a mere mortal and not a god, though you think you are as wise as a god." Tyre-Atlantis, a city that was once hailed as "the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty . . . on the holy mount of God,"[86] was thus hurled down in flames to the bottom of the ocean, never to rise again for all eternity.

THE OCCULT SCIENCES IN ATLANTIS

With the fall of Atlantis perished also much of Atlantean science and technology. Even more would be lost in the ages of decadence that followed. It was at this time, as a consequence of the Fall, that a mechanical technology took the place of the original sacred science, a transition that progressed in parallel with the increasing solidification and materialization of the world. Esoteric literature contains numerous references to the wonders of Atlantean technology, including various sophisticated forms of aerial and submarine transportation, unknown metals and alloys, the use of crystals as a power source, and even nuclear energy employed for both military and civilian applications.[87] Yet Atlantis is also remembered as the cradle of all that we may call occult and esoteric knowledge, largely on account of the Atlanteans' mastery of the so-called life force.

The Atlanteans were, according to the Austrian occultist Rudolf Steiner, the first to discover how to convert the life force into a power applicable to technical purposes, by which so many of the apparent miracles attributed to Atlantean science were accomplished. It was, Steiner wrote, "a power

immanent in all living things . . . which manifested itself through the processes of germination and growth."[88]

This life force was known throughout antiquity as prana or mana, and in the more recent scientific terminology as the orgone, etheric, or odic force. Occultists in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries knew it as *vril*, meaning "the universal principle of vital energy, life-force or vital magnetism."[89] As an intermediate emanation of the universal consciousness, it stood between pure *mind* and *matter*, permeating as such all forms of physical manifestation as well as thought. It was, in other terms, "the living generator of the experiential universe . . . a generative energy which projects experiential space and matter."[90]

It represented, moreover, the unity and source of all natural energetic agencies, including those of magnetism, electricity, and gravitation. Control over the life force, or vril, would have granted the Atlanteans almost superhuman powers over the entire world of manifestation and other spiritual realities. By the agency of vril, the Atlanteans were able to control the weather, manipulate matter, reverse gravity, and even affect the local flow of time. It also provided unlimited energy for powering all kinds of mechanical appliances.

One of the great Atlantean inventions that left the deepest impression in the occult writers of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was the airship, or *vailix*. Unlike our modern airplanes, those Atlantean airships did not rely on aerodynamic forces for lift and propulsion, but on the secret forces of magnetism and gravitation. Several mediums have left vivid descriptions of similarly powered Atlantean airships, which bear in some cases an uncanny resemblance to modern UFOs.

Other authors, such as Edgar Cayce, further referred to the Atlanteans' use of atomic energy and of crystals to draw energy directly from the Earth's core and from the sun. There are, moreover, hints that it was this sort of semiscientific interference with the balance of nature and the use of the life force for purposes of military domination that eventually led Atlantis to its downfall.

THE FALL OF MAN

The esoteric tradition considers the Fall to have been a direct consequence of the spiritual and material decadence of the early Atlanteans but is divided as to whether this was truly a "divine punishment" or the inevitable consequence of cyclical law.

From a *spiritual* point of view, the Fall could be equated with a loss of divinity, a fall into matter and materialism. From a *cosmological* point of view, it also marked the transition from the Golden Age, or Krita Yuga, to the Silver Age, or Treta Yuga.

In accordance with the doctrine of the cycles, the dates of the two Atlantean cataclysms of 35,335 BCE and 10,961 BCE coincide with remarkable exactitude with the last two negative inflection points of the 25,925-year-long precessional cycle, as shown in Fig. 5.10.

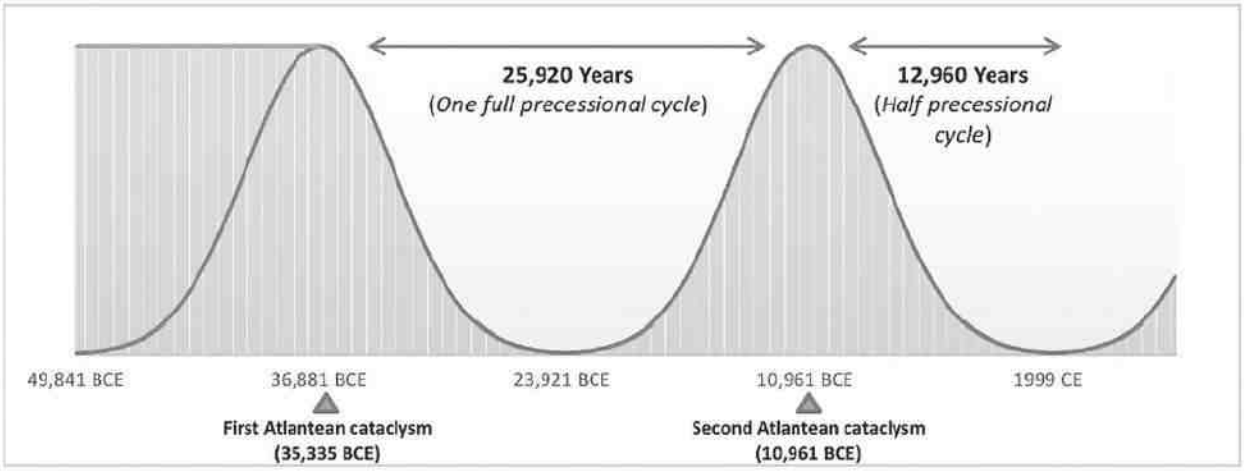

Figure 5.10. The dates of the precessional cycles aligns closely with the chronology for the major Atlantean cataclysms.

The esoteric tradition maintains that it was through the Fall that *eternal* time gave way to *cyclical* time. We are told that prior to the Fall, the Earth spun vertically on its axis, as a consequence of which there existed no seasons of summer or winter, but the entire planet enjoyed an eternal spring —a perpetual equinox. The sun, moreover, never set at the poles but was always visible a few degrees above the horizon.

If precession were merely a consequence of a "wobble" in the Earth's axis of rotation, changing its orientation with respect to the ecliptic north pole over a period of 25,920 years, there obviously would be no precession with a

perfectly vertical axis. However, if a companion star of our sun were responsible, as suggested by Walter Cruttenden's binary star hypothesis, then precession would still be observed, even with an upright axis. Only the Earth's poles would remain immune from the effects of precession—a true "imperishable sacred Land" constantly revolving around a fixed point in heaven, over which the sun would never set. With the Fall, not only did the Golden Age come to an end, but the very polar seat, which had so far remained immune from the effects of precession, was similarly plunged into the cyclical flow of time.

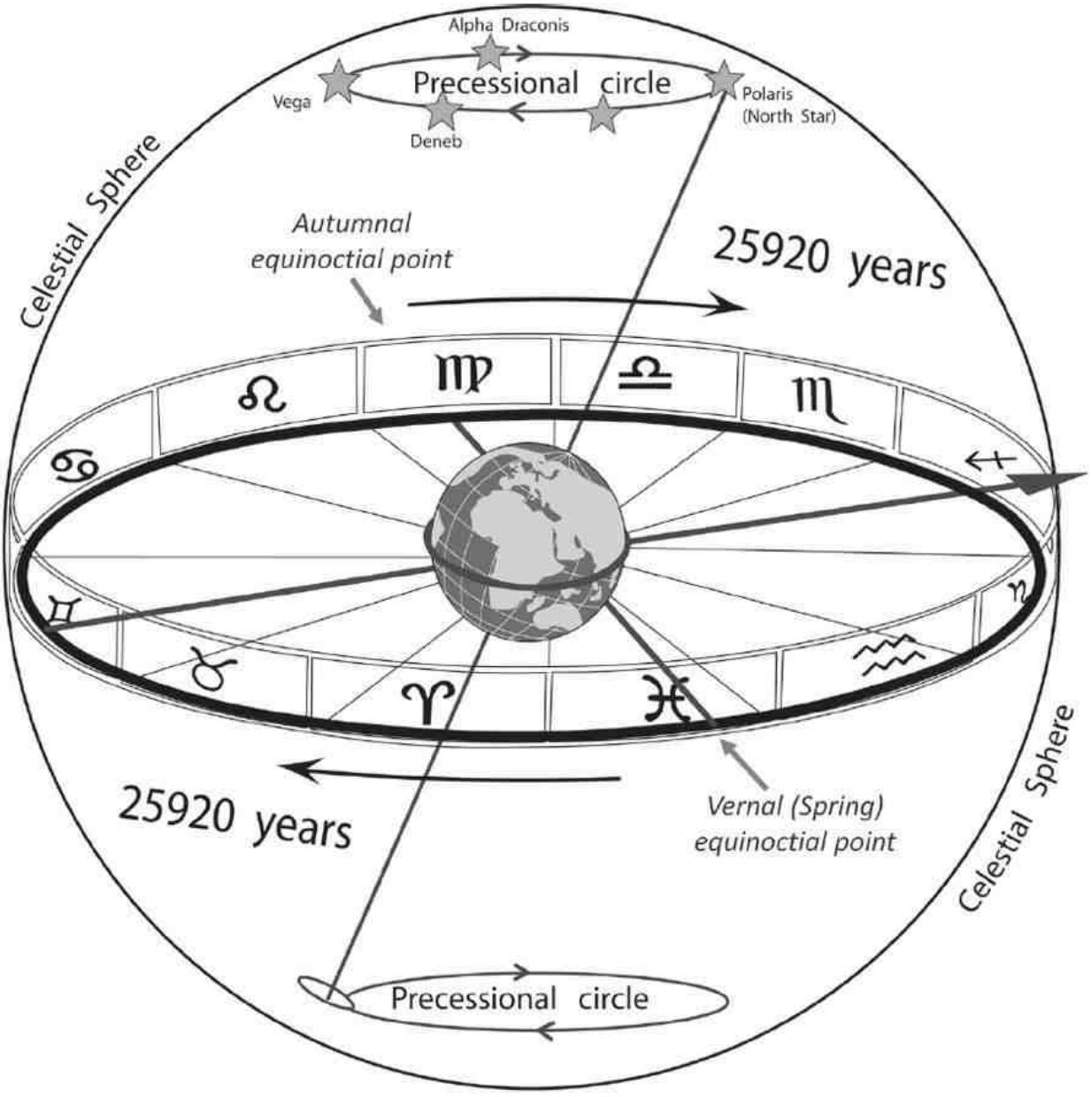

Figure 5.11. Model of precession according to conventional scientific cosmology. Compare to alternative model of precession based on Walter Cruttenden's binary star hypothesis as shown in figure 2.2. As the Earth's axis changes its orientation and rotates slowly with respect to the ecliptic pole over a period of 25,920 years, the apparent rising and setting positions of the sun at the spring equinox with respect to the background of the zodiac constellations also change, causing the equinox to seemingly "precess" along the zodiac (hence the name "precession of the equinoxes").

Black Magic

Among those who considered the Fall a consequence of the Atlanteans' own spiritual and material decadence, Plato attributed it to the prevalence of the human element over the divine. Similarly, for Blavatsky, it was sorcery that led Atlantis to its downfall.[91] The Atlanteans became thus the first sacrificers to the god of matter, worshipping their bodies and their own creations. Self-aggrandizement, the attainment of wealth and authority, became the sole purpose of their earthly existences. "They ceased to use their faculties and powers in accordance with the laws made by their Divine rulers," wrote Scott-Elliott; as a consequence of which "their connection with the Occult Hierarchy was broken."[92] To this author, the cause of the fall of Atlantis was "the evil-doing of its people, who blasphemed [the gods] and practiced the dark sciences." Similarly, according to author and esoteric scholar J. S. Gordon, "It was sorcery that led to Atlantis's downfall through some sort of semi-scientific interference in the balance of Nature."[93] Magic itself was practiced on Atlantis, wrote occultist Helena Blavatsky, "in such ungodly ways . . . that it has since become necessary for the subsequent race to draw a thick veil over the practices which were used to obtain so-called magical effects on the psychic and on the physical planes."[94]

It was only at the time of the fourth (Turanian) sub-race that decadence truly set in and two opposed camps emerged, which Cayce called the "Children of the Law of One" and the "Sons of Belial." It was the latter, "followers of the black arts," who, motivated exclusively by material thoughts and desires, "rose in rebellion . . . and drove the white emperor from

his capital, the City of the Golden Gates." They were a race, Scott-Elliott continues, "addicted to the black crafts . . . until it culminated in the inevitable catastrophe, which to a great extent purified the Earth of the monstrous evil."[95]

The Wars of the Gods

Theosophical tradition describes the great war that took place at the close of the fourth race between the Initiates of the Sacred Island and "Sons of Belial." According to Blavatsky, this war was itself a prelude to the great struggle between the Aryan adepts of the nascent fifth race and the sorcerers of Atlantis, "the Demons of the Deep . . . the Islanders surrounded with water who disappeared in the Deluge."[96]

In Hindu mythology, we find similar descriptions of the eternal battle between the gods (Devas) and the Asuras. Both races were said to be equal in power and strength, possessors of great spiritual, scientific, and technological abilities. The Devas, on the one hand, were committed to the worship of the Supreme Being and the practice of virtue, whereas the Asuras incarnated all the most devious and materialistic tendencies of their race.

This distinction between the Devas and the Asuras did not exist from the beginning. It was only after the Fall that, according to Theosophy, "the divine names of the Asuras, the Rakshasas and the Daityas, were brought down into disrepute and passed on to posterity as the names of fiends."[97]

In a similar way, in the biblical story of the fallen angels, Lucifer was said to be the most splendid of all created beings before he rebelled against God. Echoes of this may be found also in Greek mythology, in the war of the gods with the Titans, as well as in the eternal struggle between the Aesir and the Vanir of Norse mythology.

According to Cayce, the Sons of Belial broke every linkage with the occult hierarchy and cast the remaining Children of the Law of One into exile, thus triggering the first Atlantean exodus to other lands. Technology was used by the Sons of Belial in increasingly destructive ways, which "set in motion the fires of the inner portions of the Earth," eventually resulting in the breakup of the Atlantean islands.[98] Then, wrote Scott-Elliott, "came the awful retribution when millions upon millions perished. The great 'City of the Golden Gates' had by this time become a perfect den of iniquity. The waves

swept over it and destroyed its inhabitants, and the ‘black’ emperor and his dynasty fell to rise no more.”[99]

The white magicians, the Children of the Law of One, warned of the impending cataclysm, took refuge in hidden locations in the East, carrying with them the last relics of Atlantean civilization, which were thus spared from the general destruction. Two spiritual centers emerged over the course of the following age, one in the present Gobi desert and the other on what was left of the Atlantean continent after the first great catastrophe.

6

ATLANTIS IN THE SECOND AGE

We know very little of the events that followed the first Atlantean cataclysm until the foundation of the Second Atlantean Empire. Guenón gives the year 17,441 BCE for the beginning of the Treta Yuga, whereas the Mesoamerican *Codex Vaticanus 3738* records the beginning of a new world age in 21,142 BCE. The Turin King List situates the beginning of the reign of the Shemsu-Hor in the year 16,520 BCE.

A long dark age must have thus preceded the founding of the Second Atlantean Empire, during which a new center of civilization arose in the area of the present Gobi desert.

THE EXODUS

A number of concordant sources maintain that the true initiates among the Children of the Law of One had already abandoned the doomed Atlantean continent long before the great cataclysm that overtook it in 35,335 BCE. The same sources suggest that at this time our planet witnessed once again the incarnation of highly evolved souls, under the guidance of their spiritual leader, the Vaivaswata (Son of the Sun) Manu, who led the exodus of the Children of the Law of One from Atlantis and planted the seeds of the fifth root race.

According to the writings of the prominent Theosophists Annie Besant and Charles Leadbeater, fewer than nine thousand people—men, women, and children—successfully made the crossing from the doomed islands of Atlantis to the western coast of Africa under the guidance of Manu. They journeyed along the shores of the vast inland sea that at the time occupied what is now the Sahara desert, eventually crossing through Egypt and Arabia into India, and from there to the fabulous White Island in the Sea of Gobi, to the northeast of the Himalayas. Hundreds perished along the journey, and many more succumbed to the temptation of settling among the Atlantean populations of the Nile valley and Arabia.

Of the nine thousand people who had originally fled from Atlantis, only a small group of about seven hundred remained loyal to the Vaivaswata Manu through the deserts of Turkistan and northern India.[1] They settled on the White Island, in the same place where, according to Theosophical tradition, higher spiritual beings had first descended onto Earth millions of years ago to start the process of human evolution. There, the chosen few among the Children of the Law of One waited for the dawn of a new cycle, that of Aryan humanity. “They knew,” wrote Blavatsky, that “a decree had come indeed . . . that the Earth should change its race, and that the Fourth Race should be destroyed to make room for a better one.”[2] Over the course of several generations, the first embryo of the new root race developed on the White Island under the guidance of its divine masters.

The City of the Bridge

Although the seeds of the fifth root race had been planted already in Atlantean times, it was only after the cataclysm of 35,335 BCE that construction of the City of the Bridge, which was to become the new spiritual center of Aryan humanity, began on the island in the middle of the Gobi Sea.[3]

When completed, the city was a marvel. From a distance, write Besant and Leadbeater, it had the appearance “of a white dome, set in the midst of the blue Gobi Sea.” The island itself, on which the city stood, sloped up to a central point, of which the builders took advantage. “They built stupendous temples on it, all of white marble with inlaid works of gold, and these covered the whole island, making it a single Sacred City.”[4] The city proper rose in the shape of a circle, with four streets arranged like a cross,

intersecting at the main temple. The White Island was itself connected to the mainland by a stupendous bridge, a structure "so remarkable that it gave its name to the City, called because of it the City of the Bridge."[5] The style of architecture was "cyclopean." Fantastic machinery was used for the city's construction, employing some method of magnetization for the lifting of the enormous stones—some of which were over 49 meters (161 feet) long.[6] In its prime, add Besant and Leadbeater, the city compared "not ignobly" with Atlantis, and while its luxury "was never so great," its morals were "distinctly purer." Perhaps most important of all, over the city "brooded the mighty Presences, who had, and still have, their earthly dwelling-place on the sacred White Island."[7]

THE ARYAN EMPIRE

Soon, the mighty city planned by the Vaivaswata Manu grew to become the capital of an immense empire—the first Aryan Empire—which stretched its boundaries "from Tibet to the coast and from Manchuria to Siam." Aryan colonists would set out from this Gobi center toward India, Mesopotamia, and Europe.

Little is known of the history of the Aryan Empire outside of the esoteric tradition. Besant and Leadbeater maintain that, after thousands of years, it too began to show signs of decline as Aryan colonists set out in even greater numbers toward other lands.[8] By 20,000 BCE, the original Aryan Empire had largely dissolved, having by then exhausted its function.

With the Aryan root race and its various sub-races now firmly established in Asia and Europe, the decision was taken to move the seat of the empire from its original Gobi center into India. Among the reasons given by Besant and Leadbeater was the need to leave Shambhala (as the City of the Bridge was then called) in the required solitude, an "imperishable sacred land" separate from the realms of the Earth. Moreover, this was done to preserve the seed of the fifth root race from destruction, "as the Central Asian region would be much altered."[9]

The convulsions that followed the great cataclysm of 10,961 BCE shattered the City of the Bridge and wrought the destruction of most of the great temple on the White Island.[10] From that moment onward, Shambhala,

the City of the Bridge, would continue its existence only as an ethereal city, outside of the sphere of the Earth.

There can be no doubt that great civilizations once flourished in what is today one of the most arid and inhospitable deserts on the planet. According to Theosophy, the Gobi was originally a gulf of the Arctic Ocean, from which it became separated after the great Atlantean cataclysm. It existed for thousands of years as a vast inland sea, fed by multiple rivers coming down from the Tibetan plateau to the south, until climate change at the end of the second Atlantean period and the rising of the Himalayas turned it into the desert that we know today.

The Swedish explorer Sven Hedin, who famously crossed the Gobi in 1895, gathered many legends of a time when the Gobi was not yet a desert, but rather a land of many rich and prosperous cities. Another explorer, Sir Aurel Stein, was also of the opinion that these cities did exist and that the Gobi was once irrigated by glaciers. When the glaciers melted away, so did the lost kingdoms of the Gobi.

The idea of a central Asian origin for modern Aryan humanity is not new, for it was first proposed in 1778 by the then French astronomer royal and mayor of Paris Jean-Sylvain Bailly. After analyzing several ancient sky charts brought back from India by European missionaries, Bailly concluded that these charts must have been drawn thousands of years earlier from a location far to the north of India.

According to popular Italian mystery writer Peter Kolosimo, a powerful civilization, known as the Hsing-Nu, thrived in the Gobi desert for thousands of years before its degenerate descendants would become known to Chinese and European historians as the Huns. Two French missionaries, known only as Father Duparc and Latour, visited the site of the lost capital of the Hsing-Nu in 1854, leaving fabulous descriptions of the ruins that they encountered. They found hundreds of silver-covered monoliths, porcelain towers, and the eroded remains of a three-tiered pyramid. They also gathered stories of a "fiery cataclysm" that turned the whole region into a desert.[11] These ruins, along with those of the original White Island, may still be seen today, according to French author and explorer Robert Charroux, near the present-day Mount Atis, some "600 Kilometers NorthEast of Lob-Nor, in the Djasactou-Khan."[12]

The idea of a Gobi center of civilization also played a pivotal role in the

theories of occult writer James Churchward (1851–1936), who became famous for his 1926 book *The Lost Continent of Mu.* In it, Churchward speaks of the "Great Uighur Empire" that "stretched its powerful arms from the Pacific Ocean across Central Asia and into Eastern Europe" over nineteen thousand years ago.[13] Using language that is reminiscent of that of the early Theosophists, Churchward wrote that "the history of the Uighurs is the history of the Aryans." The ruins of their lost capital, he said, lay not far from where Khara-Khoto later stood.

One discovery that could help vindicate the idea of a central Asian origin of the Aryan race is that of several fair-skinned mummies in the present-day Tarim basin of northwest China, belonging to a hitherto unknown civilization known as the Tocharians. The ethnicity to which the mummies belonged has been described as Europoid or Caucasian. One individual in particular, known as the Cherchen Man, who died in about 1000 BCE, measured a remarkable 1 meter, 98 centimeters (6 feet, 6 inches), with long red-blond hair and beard. Genetic analyses conducted on the mummies have shown a prevalence of Western Eurasian maternal and paternal lineages, although other haplogroups are present—few of which can, however, be traced down to modern living populations. Interestingly, the earliest mummies from this region are almost exclusively Europoid or Caucasoid, with East Asian groups only appearing much later, about three thousand years ago. According to professor Victor Mair of the University of Pennsylvania, these findings call for a "re-examination of the old Chinese books that describe historical or legendary figures of great height, with deep-set blue or green eyes, long noses, full beards and red or blond hair."[14] Although the Tocharians were long considered European invaders or immigrants from the steppes, the latest evidence shows that they were in fact some of the earliest original inhabitants of the Gobi and Tarim basins.

THE NEW EMPIRE

Whereas, according to Theosophy, the men of the fifth root race developed faculties, both mental and physical, that would set them apart from the rest of Atlantean humanity, one must not imagine that one root race immediately disappeared to give way to another. Indeed, the Atlantean root race continued to exist, even thrived, for many thousands of years after the beginning of

Aryan humanity. This was a time that saw the birth of the Second Atlantean Empire and the great war of gods and Asuras of which speak numerous esoteric traditions.

Certainly, the great cataclysm of 35,335 BCE had left the Atlantean continent terribly rent. From the few hints contained in the Edfu Building Texts, we can conclude that the original domain of the Creator, as the primeval island of the gods was called, had become the tomb of its divine inhabitants, a dark underworld. In the same way, in the Hindu Puranas and in the Mahabharata, the evil Asuras are cast down into the Western Ocean, and their paradisiacal country of Atala is turned into a hell, a "land of the departed." In Greek mythology, Kronos, the original ruler of the Golden Age, is driven with the other Titans into the pits of Tartarus (the underworld) before he is reinstated as king of the Elysian Islands. The Book of Enoch describes the prison of the rebellious Watchers, the fallen angels, as a land in the West, "amongst the mountains of gold and silver, and iron and lead and tin." There, Enoch is shown a valley "in which there was a great upheaval of the earth and a convulsion of waters." This, we read, was "the valley of the Angels who had led mankind astray," which "burned under the earth" and through which "ran streams of burning lava."[15] All these descriptions seem to refer to the conditions that existed on the continent of Atlantis after the breakup of the isles—a land shaken by nearly continuous tremors and furious volcanic eruptions.

Even after the terrestrial convulsions ceased, reconstruction on the islands of Atlantis must have taken thousands of years. A further impulse was required to rekindle civilization: the Edfu Building Texts describe the emergence from the underworld of the primeval island of a new company of gods—a second generation of creators called Shebtiw. It is not clear whether the incarnation of a new group of spiritual beings was implied or the Shebtiw were simply a remnant of the former inhabitants. "Another creative power was needed," wrote E. A. E. Reymond, "for the revival of the domain of the ancestors . . . an act that was probably assigned to the Shebtiw."[16] The Shebtiw were further said to have found the former enclosure of the Creator in a state of decay and desolation, as if "reduced to debris." It is possible that this "enclosure" was no other than the first City of the Golden Gates, which lay in ruins since the time of the first Atlantean cataclysm—an identification supported by the description of it as "circular" in shape and surrounded by

water. From the ruins of the original domain of the Creator, the Shebtiw recovered a set of mysterious objects known as the "relics of the Pn-God," which they used to create a new domain near the edge of the island.[17]

It is only logical to assume that, for a while, the activities of the Shebtiw would have focused on the reconstruction of the island of Atlantis itself. Only later would they have embarked in expeditions of a colonial nature. The Edfu Building Texts clearly allude to the primeval island becoming, after its resurrection, the center for the settlement of new lands. This activity seems to have stemmed from a single place on the island called the "Place of the Throne," where a new divine dynasty was reinstated under the rule of the falcon god.

Some uncertainty surrounds the exact date of foundation of the Second Atlantean Empire, which may only be tentatively situated between 21,142 BCE and 17,441 BCE.

In their book *Man: Whence, How, and Whither?* Besant and Leadbeater describe a long dark age prior to the foundation of the Second Atlantean Empire. At this time, primitive races settled into Egypt and Europe, leaving behind only "incongruous flints and other such barbarous remains to mark their occupation." After this, continue the two authors, "came the Second Atlantean Empire, with a dynasty of divine Kings and with many of the heroes whom Greece later regarded as demi-Gods." This empire attained a very high level of civilization, "stately and splendid," establishing colonies as far off as Egypt, India, and South America.[18]

Inevitably, however, this Second Atlantean Empire—the last of the fourth root race—would come to clash with the nascent empire of the fifth root race, the Aryans. According to Theosophy, the two races were distinct physically and especially morally—the early Aryans "pious and meditative," the last Atlanteans "a fighting race of sorcerers, who were rapidly degenerating owing to their uncontrolled passions." Both were deeply versed in primeval wisdom but "mutually antagonistic in their struggle," treading as they were along two radically diverging evolutionary paths.[19]

Based on the geological evidence presented in the previous chapters, the Second Atlantean Empire must have extended over a still sizable portion of the Atlantean continent, corresponding to the northern island of Ruta or Poseidonis. The original City of the Golden Gates had perished in the

cataclysm of 35,335 BCE, so a new capital had to be founded, one whose description closely matches that of Plato's Atlantis citadel.[20]

Sorcery was for a time less prevalent on Atlantis, but it soon resurfaced in some of its darkest forms. Once again, wrote Besant and Leadbeater, "The immense growth of wealth and luxury gradually undermined the most splendid civilization that the world had yet seen. . . . Knowledge was prostituted to individual gain, and control over the powers of nature was turned from service to oppression."[21]

From the scant information available through esoteric sources, we may infer that after the fall of the divine dynasties, the Sons of Belial again took control over Atlantis, from where they waged a total war against the new Aryan champions of the Children of the Law of One. Much of this war was fought over the control of the former Atlantean colonies of Egypt, India, and Chaldea, as memorialized in the great Indian epics of the Mahabharata and the Ramayana.

THE ATLANTEAN COLONIES

While the First Atlantean Empire may be rightfully considered an insular civilization, the Second Atlantean Empire was of a distinctly colonial nature.

Ever since their establishment, the Atlantean colonies of Egypt and South America had achieved a level of prosperity that easily rivaled that of the motherland, and they soon began seeking independence. "At that period," wrote Besant and Leadbeater, "the earlier Cities of the Golden Gates had been sunk beneath the waves for many thousands of years, and though the chief of the Kings of the Island of Poseidonis still arrogated to himself the beautiful title [of his predecessors], he made no pretense to imitate the methods of government which had ensured them a stability so far beyond the common lot of human arrangements."[22]

With a much-weakened central government and authority, the colonies became the main battlegrounds of the incipient conflict between the Atlantean and Aryan root races.

The Egyptian Colony

The Turin Papyrus situates the foundation of the Egyptian Colony in about 16,520 BCE, at the time of the Shemsu-Hor. These demigods were most certainly identical with the second generation of creators, the Shebtiw, which in the Edfu Building Texts were said to have left the primeval island and, according to Reymond, "sailed to another part of the primeval world, in which they created Heracleopolis."[23] From the works of the Phoenician priest Sanchoniathon, we learn, moreover, that "the country to the South [i.e., Egypt]" was given by Kronos "to the god Taautus [Thoth], that it may be his kingdom."[24] The American mystic Edgar Cayce similarly spoke of a massive exodus of Atlanteans into Egypt in the centuries leading up to the final catastrophe of 10,961 BCE.

According to Theosophy, by 13,000 BCE, the Egyptian colony had already achieved virtual independence.[25] This is signaled in Manetho's king list by the beginning of a new dynasty of "Other Kings," which seemingly followed the reign of the demigods in 12,870 BCE.

The Chaldean Colony

Nippur Tablet B situates the beginning of the first postdiluvian dynasty in Sumer in the year 20,727 BCE. Other versions of the Sumerian King List, however, give the year 34,361 BCE as the beginning of a new dynasty in the Mesopotamian city of Kish, the first after the Flood. It is possible the difference was due to an attempt by the copyists to fill in the enormous gap of 13,634 years from the Flood to the time of the first human dynasties. So far, no conclusive archaeological evidence of the city of Kish has emerged, and it is quite possible that this city now lies submerged under the waters of the Persian Gulf.

In the Theosophical tradition of Besant and Leadbeater, the date of the foundation of the Chaldean colony is given as 19,000 BCE. "The Babylonia known to the students of archaeology," they wrote, was in many ways a reflection of this earlier and greater empire.[26]

The South American and Mesoamerican Colonies

The Mexican *Codex Vaticanus 3738* gives the year 21,142 BCE as the beginning of a new cycle or world age.

In the aftermath of the sinking of the southern Atlantean island of Daitya, the coasts of Brazil and South America in general would have received, of all lands, the largest influx of Atlantean refugees. It may thus be possible to reconstruct two different phases in the development of the South American colony: a first phase, characterized by settlement in the coastal areas of Brazil, the Caribbean, and the Gulf of Mexico; and a second phase, characterized by a large westward migration toward the more sheltered regions of the Andean cordillera.

Besant and Leadbeater considered the great megalithic civilization of Peru to have been modeled on that of imperial Atlantis. The belief that this civilization had its origins in an even earlier prehistoric empire of the Brazilian wilderness was shared, among others, by author and explorer Harold Wilkins and would, moreover, inspire Colonel P. H. Fawcett's illfated expedition in search of the fabulous lost city of Zeta. As recently as 1976, the enigmatic *Chronicle of Akakor* by journalist Karl Brugger would fuel Western imagination with stories of a great Amazonian empire that existed as much as sixteen thousand years ago in the unexplored interior of Brazil.[27]

In his famous readings, Cayce further spoke of the land of Incal, the splendid South American colony of imperial Atlantis. He also mentioned the existence of Atlantean colonies in Yucatan, the Pyrenees, Portugal, and the Carpathians.

The Indian Colony

Greek mythology preserves the tradition of a great Indian war, during which the god Dionysus, identified with the Egyptian Osiris, led a mighty army into India to subdue the country. This account parallels in many ways that of the war of the gods and the Asuras contained in the great Hindu epic the Mahabharata. References to an expedition into India by "Herakles of Egypt" and Dionysus are also found in Philostratus's *Life of Apollonius of Tyana,* in which a battle is described between the invading army and the Indian sages, who successfully repel the attack with "thunderbolts and rockets of fire."

According to the Greek historian Pausanias (fifth century BCE), "Dionysus was the first to invade India, and the first to bridge the river Euphrates," a feat that would later be emulated by Alexander the Great.[28] Dionysus was said, moreover, to have founded many cities and introduced

new varieties of seeds and domesticated plants, as well as oxen to plow the fields. According to Arrian (second century CE), "He [Dionysus] made most of the Indians farmers instead of wanderers, and armed them also with the arms of warfare."[29] As to the date of this invasion, Herodotus (in the fifth century BCE) placed it in the year 15,569 BCE, observing in book II of his *Histories* that "the years between Dionysus [Osiris] and Amasis are reckoned by the Egyptians at fifteen thousand." This would place Dionysus's Indian expedition less than a thousand years after the foundation of the Egyptian colony in 16,520 BCE.

The Atlantean rule of India lasted probably until 14,000 or 13,000 BCE, when Aryan invaders from central Asia overran the country. According to the French orientalist Louis Jacolliot (1837–1890), the Aryans have ruled India since about 13,300 BCE, a date that he claimed to have fixed astronomically.[30]

Certainly, by the end of the second Atlantean period, many of the Atlantean colonies had already developed into their own independent kingdoms—the embryos of what would become the first neo-Atlantean empires. This situation would have favored further admixture with the Aryan element, creating, in fact, a hybrid "Atlanto-Aryan" civilization.

The colonies would have been still largely dependent on the Atlantean motherland for much of their science and technology but would have formed otherwise politically independent entities. The great cataclysm of 10,961 BCE and the final submergence of the island of Poseidonis in 9,564 BCE destroyed any residual vestiges of a "pure" Atlantean civilization, while also bringing incalculable damage and devastation to the colonies.

Table 6.1 provides a synthetic chronology of the second Atlantean period.

TABLE 6.1.
CHRONOLOGY OF THE SECOND ATLANTEAN PERIOD

Date	Event	Main Sources
35,335 BCE	The Fall—First Atlantean cataclysm	Sumerian King Lists,[*21] Berossus,[*21] Yuga Cycles, Guenón
(?)	Foundation of the City of	Besant and Leadbeater,

	the Bridge near the White Island in the Sea ofGobi—beginning of the fifth root race, the Aryans	Theosophists
Ca.25,000 BCE	Foundation of the second Atlantean Empire—building of a new City of the Golden Gates on Poseidonis (Ruta)	(hypothetical)
21,142 BCE (?)	Foundation of the Atlantean South American and Mesoamerican colonies	*Codex Vaticanus 3738,*[*21] *Cayce, Theosophists*
20,727 BCE (?)	Foundation of the Atlantean Chaldean colony in Sumer	Nippur Tablet B,[*21], Besant and Leadbeater, Theosophists
Ca.20,000 BCE	Dissolution of the first Aryan Empire	Besant and Leadbeater, Theosophists
17,441 BCE	Beginning of the Treta Yuga	Yuga Cycles, Guenón[*21]
16,520 BCE	Foundation of the Atlantean Egyptian colony—reign of the Shemsu-Hor, or demigods, over Egypt	Turin Papyrus,[*21] Manetho, Sanchoniathon, Herodotus
15,936 BCE	Foundation of the Mexican Atlantean colony in Yucatán	*Codex Vaticanus 3738,*[*21] *Cayce, Theosophists*
15,569 BCE	Atlantean-Indian War (Mahabharata's war of the gods and the Asuras)	Herodotus,[*21] Mahabharata, Besant and Leadbeater, Theosophists
14,000 BCE	Atlantean Empire in South America at its height	Brugger, Theosophists

13,500 BCE	First Aryan invasion of Egypt	Besant and Leadbeater, Theosophists
13,300 BCE	Aryan invasion of India and end of the Atlantean Indian colony; the rule of the Brahmatma (Manu) is established over India	Jacolliot, Besant and Leadbeater, Theosophists, Yuga Cycles (Laws of Manu)
12,870 BCE	First local Atlanto-Aryan dynasty in Egypt	Manetho*21
10,961 BCE	Great Flood—second Atlantean cataclysm	Berossus, Hebrew Bible (after Alford), Manetho, Sothic cycles, Assyrian calendar, *Codex Vaticanus 3738, Yuga Cycles, Guenón,*21 *Cayce*

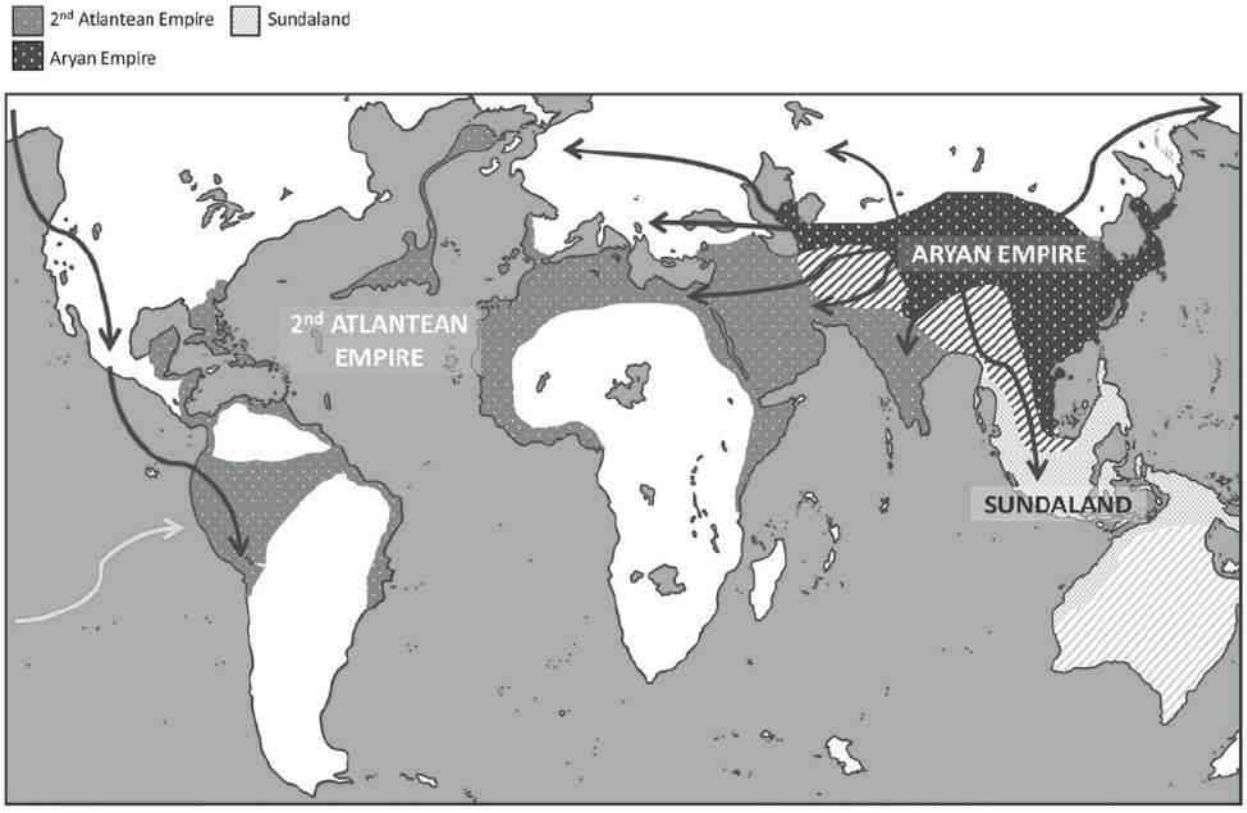

Figure 6.1. Extent of the Atlantean and Aryan Empires during the second Atlantean period (ca. 35,335–10,961 BCE).

BUILT BEFORE THE FLOOD

Similar to the fate of many of the physical remains of the first Atlantean age, very few relics and archaeological remains survive from the second Atlantean period. This is in no way surprising if one considers the immense magnitude of the terrestrial cataclysms of 35,335 BCE and 10,961 BCE and the dramatic increase in sea levels that followed the end of the last ice age.

To this day, less than 0.05 percent of the ocean floor has been mapped to any meaningful level of detail, with the average resolution of ocean floor maps hardly exceeding 5 kilometers (3.1 miles). In comparison, the surfaces of the moon and the planet Mars have now been mapped to a resolution of just a few yards.[31] Even so, countless examples can be cited of submerged ruins of unknown age around the world.[32]

The Age of the Great Pyramid

No other ancient monument has given rise to as many hypotheses and theories as the Great Pyramid of Giza. The Egyptological consensus that the Great Pyramid was intended as the tomb of the pharaoh Khufu of the Fourth Dynasty (2589–2566 BCE) has come under increasing academic and nonacademic criticism. Authors Graham Hancock and Robert Bauval have pointed to a possible date of construction for the Great Pyramid and the main monuments on the Giza plateau as early as 10,450 BCE, and they are supported in this by geologist Robert Schoch of Boston University.

Esoteric sources have similarly claimed a far greater antiquity for the pyramids and the Sphinx than what is assumed by mainstream Egyptology. The French occultists Edouard Schuré and Fabre d'Olivet considered the Great Pyramid to be the work of the Red Atlantean race—"almost as old as the very carcasse of our continents."[33] Among later Theosophists, ScottElliott believed that the pyramids predated "the catastrophe of 80,000 years ago."[34] Such dates were based at least in part on Arabic sources that placed the construction of the pyramids in antediluvian times.[*22]

Both Blavatsky and Cayce, however, rejected the idea that the pyramids could have been built before the Atlantean cataclysm of 10,961 BCE. Blavatsky attributed the construction of the Great Pyramid to the Atlanteans'

"degenerate descendants," the nation of Plato's Atlantis.[35] This would date the Great Pyramid's construction to between 10,961 BCE and 9600 BCE, in what we have called the neo-Atlantean period. Cayce similarly gave the year 10,500 BCE as the epoch of construction of the Great Pyramid, while hinting at the possibility that it represented an attempt "to restore and add to that [those constructions] which had been begun," most likely during the second Atlantean period.[36]

All the available evidence suggests that the Atlantean cataclysm of 10,961 BCE implied a change in the obliquity of the Earth's axis of rotation, as well as the displacement of the Earth's old geographic poles.

Those authors who claim a date of construction for the Great Pyramid *before* the time of the last terrestrial cataclysm and axial shift apparently ignore the fact that, if this truly had been the case, the Great Pyramid could not possibly be perfectly oriented to the *present* geographic North Pole with the astonishing precision that can be observed. This confirms the fact that the Great Pyramid is almost certainly *not* an Atlantean monument. Its construction must date, therefore, to the neo-Atlantean period (10,961 BCE–9600 BCE), or even later.

The Age of Tiwanaku and the Megaliths of Peru

The problem of the age of Tiwanaku, a site located at an altitude of 3,870 meters (12,697 feet) above sea level near Lake Titicaca on the border of Peru and Bolivia, is closely related to that of the origin of the Andes.

More than one city, Tiwanaku is, in fact, *five cities,* built on top of each other. Nearly a century of archaeological research has barely succeeded at scratching the surface of the "real" Tiwanaku, whose ruins are believed to exist at depths between 12 and 20 meters (39 and 65 feet).[37]

Tiwanaku, with its giant fallen stones and broken monoliths, many weighing hundreds of tons, speaks of an immense and suddenly devastating cataclysm. Arthur Posnansky, Rolf Müller, Hans Schindler Bellamy, and Edmund Kiss—some of the early investigators of the site—all assigned to it an age of between fifteen and seventeen thousand years. To them, Tiwanaku was once a thriving seaport that was lifted to its present elevation by some unfathomable cataclysm in the recent geological past. A similar view has been shared by scientists D. S. Allan and J. B. Delair, who in their 1997 book

Cataclysm! directly linked the uplift of the Andes with the last terrestrial cataclysm of 10,961 BCE.

If Tiwanaku was indeed a seaport before the great Andean uplift and this event can be dated, as Allan and Delair suggest, to the end of the last ice age, it follows that the age of Tiwanaku must be *greater* than 10,961 BCE. Its ruins may be, therefore, among the few surviving remnants of the second Atlantean period.

Evidence of cataclysmic destruction can be also observed at a number of other megalithic sites outside of the ancient Inca capital city of Cuzco. On the hill of Rodadero, overlooking the ancient fortress of Sacsayhuaman, some immense rocks with steps and niches carved into them lie in an apparent confusion over a vast area, as if they had once formed part of a single titanic construction. Many of the stones are turned upside down or broken into fragments, each weighing many hundreds of tons. No human force could have split open such enormous masses of rock, only a sudden and devastating upheaval.

Other Sites Aligned to Former Pole Positions

Various mathematical and statistical methods have been proposed in recent years to date ancient sites based on their astronomical orientation and alignment to former pole positions.

The results of studies independently conducted by image scientist Mark Carlotto and mathematical engineer Mario Buildreps, who analyzed the orientation of different clusters of ancient sites, suggest that the position of the Earth’s geographic poles may have shifted as many as five times over the past five hundred thousand years.

It has also been suggested that the obliquity of the ecliptic, which is a measure of the inclination of the Earth’s axis with respect to the celestial pole, may have been steadily declining since the time of the last terrestrial cataclysm. According to British-Australian astronomer George F. Dodwell, the inclination of the Earth’s axis may be only now returning to a point of equilibrium around the value of 23.5°. This would explain such anomalous orientations as that of the great temple of Karnak, which would indicate an “impossible” obliquity value of 25°9'55" at the time of its construction.[38] Among the sites that display anomalous north-south orientations, we should

include the ancient city of Teotihuacan in Mexico, oriented 15.5° east of north, the temple of Karnak in Egypt, the Coricancha of Cuzco, the Kalasasaya temple of Tiwanaku, and the early megalithic foundations of Machu Picchu, all built at a time when the obliquity of the ecliptic was apparently greater than 24°. To these may be added the strangely oriented Osireion temple of Abydos (28° to the east of north), and the monumental megalithic platforms of Baalbek and Jerusalem. It is also possible that a value of 26.5° for the obliquity of the ecliptic at the beginning of the neo-Atlantean period could have been deliberately incorporated in the key dimensions of the Great Pyramid as the inclination of the pyramid's descending passage.[39]

The next chapters will discuss some of this evidence in connection with the great cataclysm of 10,961 BCE and the circumstances that led to the final collapse of Atlantean civilization.

PART III

TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

7

SERPENTS IN THE SKY

Nearly a dozen independent traditions from around the world point to the period between approximately 11,500 BCE and 9500 BCE as the beginning of a new cycle or world age. This time significantly coincided with a mysterious cold spell accompanied by mass extinctions on a nearly hemispheric scale known as the Younger Dryas. In esoteric chronologies, this time marked the final sinking of Atlantis.

There can be no confusion between the first Atlantean cataclysm of 35,335 BCE and that of 10,961 BCE, which are separated by almost an entire precessional cycle, just as there can be no mistaking the terrestrial cataclysm of 10,961 BCE with the much more localized one that caused the sinking of the last Atlantean island of Poseidonis in 9600 BCE. These were the three floods remembered in Greek mythology as that of Ogyges, Deucalion, and Dardanus, the last of which occurred, according to Plato, *ten thousand years* before his time.[1]

Whereas Plato spoke of alternating cataclysms of fire and water,[2] Berossus similarly spoke of the two twin cataclysms of the *conflagration* and the *deluge*, ruled by the opposing zodiacal signs of Cancer and Capricorn, each separated by exactly half a precessional cycle.

The only satisfactory explanation for these recurring cataclysms and their apparent correlation to the precessional cycle seems to be the existence of a

binary companion star of our sun, quite possibly the dog star, Sirius. This latter hypothesis has received support from astronomers such as William Brown, who have made the case that Sirius appears to be immune from the effects of precession and therefore may have an interlocking orbit with our sun.[3] This may also be the reason why the ancient Egyptians based their calendar on the heliacal rising of the star Sirius.

The last two terrestrial cataclysms of 35,335 BCE and 10,961 BCE may have thus coincided with our sun's closest approach to its celestial double. The effects of such an approach would have included serious electromagnetic disturbances and possible alterations of the orbit and axis of rotation of the planets. The gravitational pull of another star may have also been responsible for sending celestial objects from the boundaries of our solar system into a potential collision course with the Earth. The following chapter will present the evidence for just one such celestial impact at the end of the last ice age, about thirteen thousand years ago.

FROM THE HEART OF HEAVEN

The hieroglyphs of the Mexican pyramid of Xochicalco contain the vivid description of a cataclysm of fire and water that caused the sinking of the original island homeland of the gods. At Xochicalco, just as in the Edfu Building Texts, the agent of such destruction was quite obviously a comet, traditionally pictured as a snake. According to the Edfu texts, it was as a consequence of the attack launched by the snake (a comet) on the Domain of the Creator that "the Primeval Island sank beneath the waves and all of its divine inhabitants perished." A world age ended in darkness. The disaster caused the ground of the island to split and was followed, according to Egyptologist Eve Reymond, by "a storm . . . so violent that it destroyed the sacred land."[4]

Plato similarly spoke of a "declination of the bodies moving in the heavens around the earth" as the cause of cyclical conflagrations,[5] in the same way as an eleven-thousand-year-old carving from Göbekli Tepe could bear witness, according to a recent interpretation, to a celestial impact that occurred about 10,950 BCE.[6]

In the biblical book of Revelation, we read that "a sign . . . appeared in

the heavens . . . a great fiery dragon" whose tail "obscured a third part of the stars," which began to fall toward the Earth. "The heavenly stars fell to Earth. . . . And the very heavens themselves parted, like a scroll being unrolled."[7]

Revelation also states "the mountains and islands were jolted from their proper places,"[8] and there could be heard "unnatural sounds and thunder, lightning and earthquake," accompanied by "hail and fire and water pouring altogether over the Earth."[9] These were followed by "a mighty earthquake, the like of which had not occurred since man was created,"[10] which caused all the cities and nations of the world to collapse.

"The Sun became black, like a hairy sackcloth, and the moon looked blood-stained. . . . A third part of the Sun was eclipsed . . . and the day darkened."[11] And finally, "in a single hour . . . all the islands vanished, and their mountains were gone."[12]

Greek mythology tells the story of the fall of Phaeton, the "Shining One," who stole the heavenly chariot of his father, Helios, the sun, threatening with his imprudence the Earth and all living creatures with destruction. As the chariot of the sun approaches the Earth, "the mountains burn . . . the earth bursts into flames, opens in deep fissures and all its moisture dries up. The meadows turn white, the trees are consumed with all their leaves . . . great cities are destroyed with all their walls, and the flames reduce whole nations with all their peoples to ashes."[13]

Lakes and rivers dry up, and Africa becomes a desert. Only then, Zeus is forced to intervene, striking the unfortunate Phaeton with lightning. Like a falling star, Phaeton plunges blazing in the river Eridanus, "leaving a long trail in the air."

In his *Theogony*, the Greek poet Hesiod (c. 700 BCE) similarly describes Typhon as a "fearful dragon, with dark, flickering tongues." His head, writes Pseudo-Apollodorus (first or second century CE), "brushed the stars" as he "hurled kindled rocks towards the earth" and "filled the very heavens with hissing and shouts, spouting a great jet of fire from his mouth." To the Roman historian Pliny (23–79 CE), it was a "terrible comet . . . a veritable ball of fire . . . twisted like a coil." Just like Phaeton, Typhon was struck by the lightning of Zeus: "Flame shot forth from the thunderstruck lord in the dim rugged glens of the mount, when he was smitten A huge part of huge earth was scorched by the terrible vapor and melted as tin melts, in the glow

of the blazing fire."[14]

Another tradition from ancient Persia describes how the star Tistrya, often identified with Sirius, once "let a stream of fire towards the Earth . . . and filled our world with its devouring heat."[15]

The Norse *Edda* saga (13th century CE) talks about the Midgard serpent, which "writhes in giant rage and seeks to gain the land," causing the Earth to "shake violently," trees to be "torn up by the roots," the mountains to "topple down," and the sea to "rush over the land." Just as in the Phaeton myth, the Midgard serpent is struck by the thunder god Thor, and his body is cast into the depths of the sea.

In the ancient Egyptian "Tale of the Shipwrecked Sailor," (2040–1782 BCE) the serpent ruler of a lost island kingdom speaks of the destruction of his land "when a star fell" and all the people of his race "went up in flames through it."[16]

Across the Atlantic, the Chilam Balam of Chumayel describes a mighty cataclysm during which the "skin" and "bones" of the celestial serpent were shattered, after which "the sky fell down and the dry land sank."[17]

Even more explicit is a myth from the Ojibwa tribe of the Great Lakes region of North America that tells the story of a time when a great fiery comet nearly destroyed the world. It appeared "as a second Sun in the sky . . . growing larger, brighter and hotter as it hurled towards them." It then "ran down to earth, and blanketed the world with its long, flowing, glowing tail. . . . Tall trees burst into flames like giant torches, lakes and rivers began to boil, and even the rocks glowed and shattered from the heat, as terrible fire swallowed up the entire world."[18]

It is only within the last few decades that geologists have been able to piece together the evidence for just such a cataclysm as described in ancient mythologies from around the world at the end of the last ice age.

WHEN THE SKY FELL

In recent years, the hypothesis that a giant disintegrating comet impacted portions of North America, western Asia, and Europe about 12,900 years ago, triggering what has since become known as the Younger Dryas extinction

event, has been gaining traction, in part thanks to the seminal work of geologists Richard Firestone, J. P. Kennett, and Allen West.

For almost a century, scientists had known that the beginning of the Younger Dryas had been accompanied by devastating fires, intense seismic and volcanic activity, massive glacial floods, and wild swings in the Earth's magnetic field. What they ignored was what caused them. Firestone, Kennett and West were among the first to recognize in this pattern of destruction the telltale signs of a cosmic impact.

Nanodiamonds Are Forever

In 2007, Firestone, Kennett, West, and others published an article in the prestigious journal *PNAS* under the thought-provoking title "Evidence for an Extraterrestrial Impact 12,900 Years Ago that Contributed to the Megafaunal Extinctions and the Younger-Dryas Cooling." In it, they called attention to a mysterious "black mat" layer overlaying most Clovis-age prehistoric sites in North America. Their analyses of the layer revealed significant "peak abundances of (i) magnetic grains with iridium, (ii) magnetic microspherules, (iii) charcoal, (iv) soot, (v) carbon spherules, (vi) glasslike carbon containing nanodiamonds and (vii) fullerenes containing ET helium, all of which are evidence for an ET impact and associated biomass burning at ca. 12.9 ka."[19]

This layer, moreover, appeared to have been deposited in the equivalent of a geological instant directly over megafauna remains and Clovisage artifacts. Pleistocene megafauna, as well as all traces of Clovis culture, simply vanished from the geological record above the mysterious black mat. Chemical analysis of the layer further suggested that it had most likely formed as a result of the "decomposition of charred wood and/or a prolonged algal bloom" in the aftermath of a cosmic impact around the Younger Dryas boundary.[20]

Samples of this black mat were moreover found to be strongly radioactive, with concentrations of uranium and thorium exceeding by over twenty-five times the average concentration of these elements in the Earth's crust, as well as containing traces of the extremely rare element plutonium—a typical by-product of nuclear reactions.

Nanodiamond concentrations also peaked in the Younger Dryas boundary layer, with nanodiamonds frequently being associated with larger fragments

of glass-like carbon and carbon spherules whose formation can only be explained under conditions of extreme heat and pressure. “To date,” wrote researchers Douglas Kennett, James Kennett, Allen West, and others, “scientists know of only two layers in which more than one identification of nanodiamonds has been found: The Younger Dryas boundary 12,800 years ago and the well-known Cretaceous-Tertiary boundary 65 million years ago, which is marked by the mass extinction of the dinosaurs.”[21]

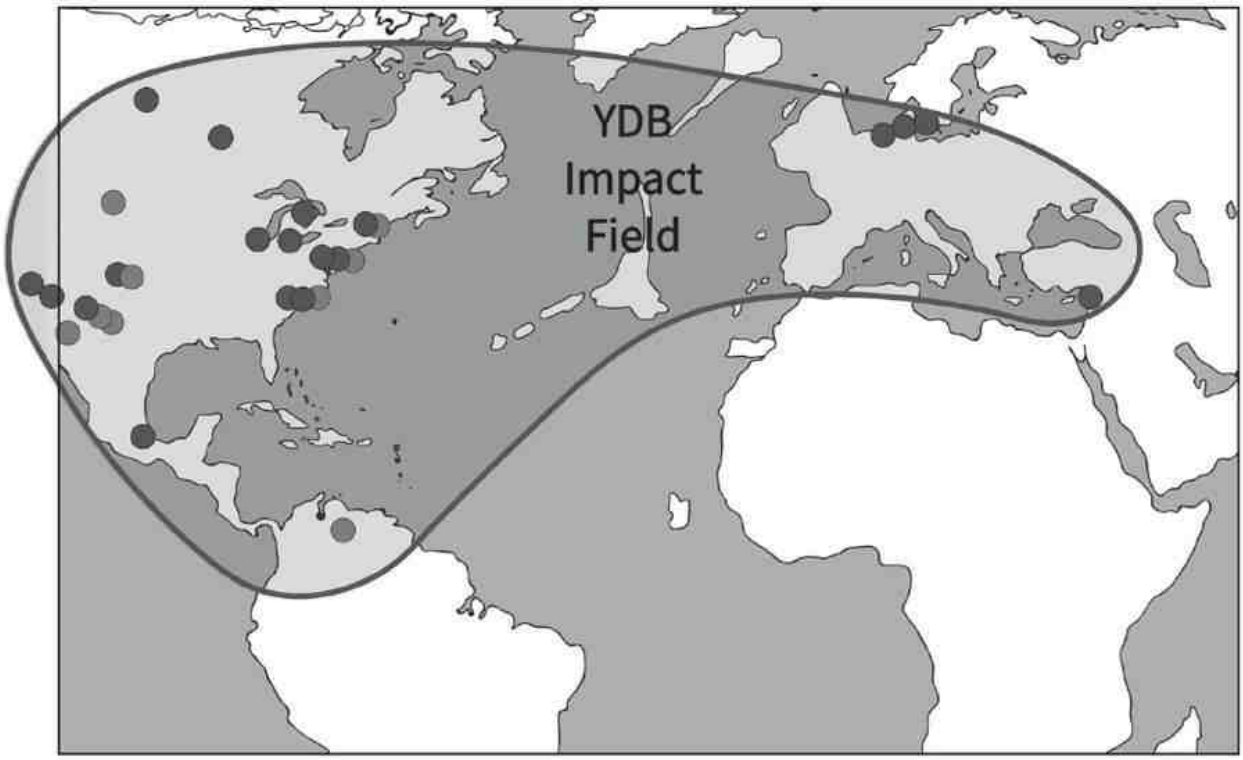

Figure 7.1. Map showing twenty-eight sites containing Younger Dryas boundary nanodiamonds. The solid line defines the current known limits of the Younger Dryas boundary field of cosmic-impact proxies, spanning 50 million square kilometers (19.3 million square miles) (after Dietrich, 2019; Kinzie et al., 2014; and Wittke et al., 2013).

The evidence is consistent with an impactor that was “carbon rich, but nickel and iron poor,” which is in line with the generally accepted composition of comets. Unlike a rocky or metallic asteroid, a comet of this kind would have most likely disintegrated upon entering the Earth’s

atmosphere, causing a number of high altitude blasts but leaving little evidence in the form of a large crater on the ground.[22]

Fire from Heaven

Firestone, Kennett, and West estimate that the total energy required to produce the continental devastation, global cooling, and megafaunal extinctions associated with the Younger Dryas event might have been in the order of *10 million megatons* (10^7), and perhaps as great as *1,000 million megatons* (10^9). This is close to the equivalent of 1,500 to 150,000 times the combined power of all the world's nuclear weapons, which the *Telegraph* newspaper in England estimated at 6,600 megatons.[23]

As a comparison, the bolide that exploded in 1908 over Tunguska, in Siberia, flattening an area of nearly 2,000 square kilometers (772 square miles) of forest, released an estimated energy of between 10 and 30 megatons. Contemporary eyewitness accounts described a "second Sun" lighting up in the sky, followed by a thunderous noise and fiery winds that set the branches of the trees on fire.[24] The resulting earthquake was detected by seismographs around the world with a magnitude of 5.0 on the Richter scale, while the Earth's magnetic field fluctuated wildly in the days after the impact.

Mass Extinction

When the Tambora volcano erupted in 1815 on the island of Sumbawa, in present-day Indonesia, ashfall from the eruption spread throughout the world, lowering global temperatures by 0.4–0.7 °C (0.7–1 °F) in what became known as the "year without summer." The Tambora eruption was the largest recorded in modern history: the explosion was heard 2,600 kilometers (1,615 miles away), and for two days, pitch darkness reigned within a radius of 600 kilometers (373 miles) from the epicenter. Yet in terms of explosive power, even the eruption of Mount Tambora—at nearly 800 megatons—was tiny compared to the 1,000 million megatons proposed by Firestone, Kennett, and West for the Younger Dryas event.

The climate and weather patterns at the end of the Younger Dryas were permanently changed over vast areas of the planet, triggering a new ice age

that lasted for the good part of a thousand years. The Norse sagas referred to this time as the Fimbul Winter: “The mighty, the great, the iron winter, when snow drives from all quarters, the frosts are so severe, the winds so keen, that there is no joy in the sun.”[25]

The Iranian tradition similarly spoke of a time when “snowflakes fell thick, even on the highest tops of mountains,” bringing a “fierce, foul frost” all over the world.[26] Both myths accurately describe the “fallen sky” conditions, similar to a nuclear winter that would have likely followed a major cosmic impact.

According to British scientists Dereck Allan and J. Bernard Delair, this was the event responsible for the great megafaunal extinctions of the late Pleistocene epoch. To them, mammoths and the other Pleistocene megafauna did not live during an ice age; instead, they were the victims of an event that produced one. Their picture is not one of gradualism, but of wholesale slaughter and extinction, in which “practically the whole Pleistocene mammalian fauna was wiped out or reduced to a pitiful vestige of its former greatness.”[27] Within a geological instant, they were all gone: entire species of camels and horses, giant sloths, the prehistoric aurochs, bison, oxen, cave bears, lions, and tigers, and also several types of elephants and mastodons, including the famous Siberian and North American mammoth. Coincident with this wholesale slaughter on land was the inland deposition of “myriads of contemporary marine shell” and the stranding at high altitudes of “marine mammals such as whales, porpoises, walruses and seals.”[28] Entire forests were similarly flattened and buried in a jumbled heap under vast accumulations of ice and mud.

The Riddle of the Frozen Mammoths

Perhaps one of the greatest riddles of the Pleistocene extinction is that of the frozen mammoths. Multiple accounts exist of frozen mammoths discovered perfectly preserved in ice in Siberia and Alaska, often with their stomach contents still intact. Experts claim that as many as *10 million* of these ancient creatures may still lie encased in their icy tombs in the Arctic tundra.[29] Their ivory remains largely undecayed, a condition that can only be explained if the carcasses became frozen immediately after death, which must have come suddenly.

Mammoths did not live and, indeed, could never have survived in the Arctic tundra where their frozen carcasses have been found. Similar to their closest surviving relative—the Indian elephant—mammoths needed hundreds of pounds of food daily just to survive. For more than eight months of the year, there is nothing that such a creature could eat in the Arctic tundra, yet there were hundreds of thousands, perhaps *millions* of mammoths living in ancient times in what today are Siberia and Alaska.

In some cases, mammoth carcasses appear to have been "flash-frozen," as suggested by the presence of undigested food in their stomachs and mouths. According to British-American zoologist Ivan T. Sanderson, temperatures as low as −101.1°C (−150°F) must have existed in order to quickfreeze a corpse the size of a mammoth without any visible damage to its cellular structure.

Once again, the cometary impact hypothesis seems to be the only possible explanation that could make sense of the evidence. In the immediate aftermath of the impact, as superheated gas and ejecta were pushed out toward the atmosphere, a near vacuum would have formed at ground level, creating, in the words of Firestone, West, and Simon Warwick-Smith, "an equally powerful downdraft of frigid high-altitude air travelling at hundreds of miles per hour with temperatures exceeding 150 degrees F below zero . . . flash-freezing within seconds everything it touched."[30]

Those animals that did not die in the initial blast or in the flash-freeze that followed would have slowly starved to death as their entire food supply vanished in a matter of weeks.

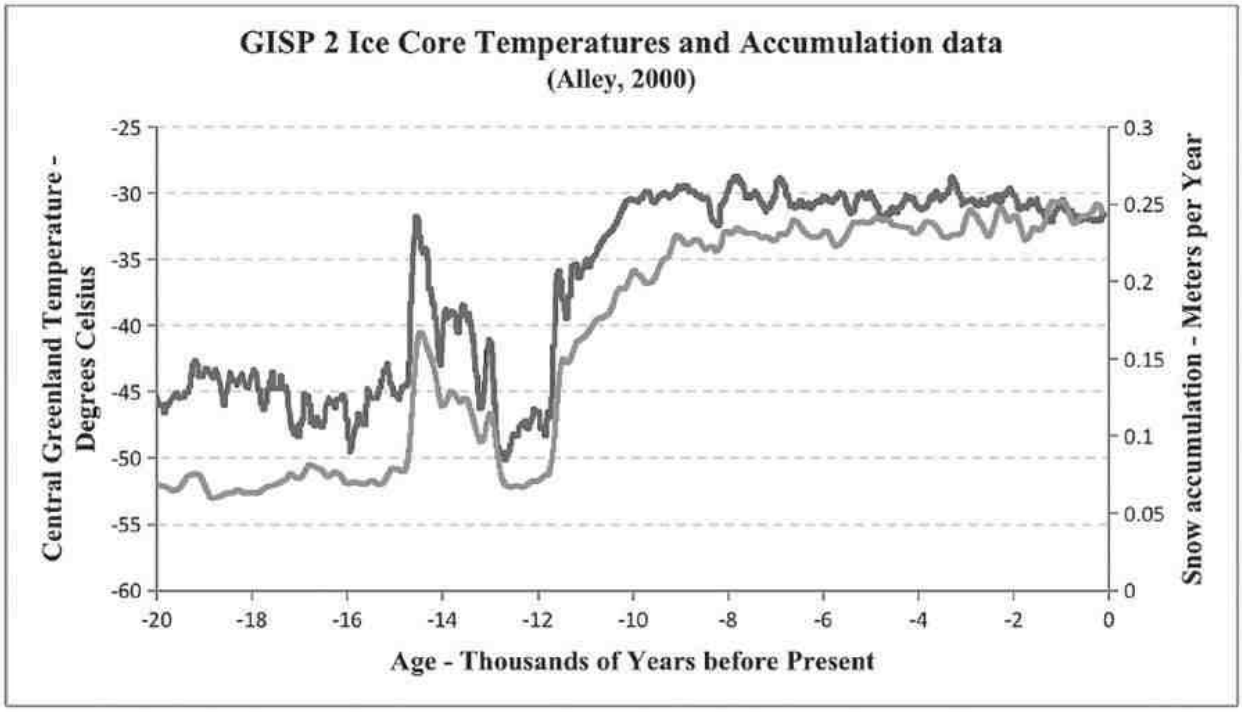

Table 7.1. Chart showing the annual average air temperatures and snow accumulation data from Greenland ice cores during the Younger Dryas boundary event and over the past twenty thousand years. (after Alley, 2000; NOAA Paleoclimatology Program)

The Black Mat

These events may help explain the formation of the mysterious black mat layer associated with the Younger Dryas boundary event. This layer already has been shown to contain a number of typical impact markers, including carbon spherules; magnetic grains; nanodiamonds; nickel; iridium; the radioactive elements uranium, plutonium, and thorium; and glass-like carbon. The presence in the mat of charcoal, soot, and aromatic hydrocarbons resulting from the decomposition of charred wood and other biomass, moreover, suggests that a combination of massive wildfires and algal blooms may have contributed to its formation. Algae, a typical "disaster species," would have thrived in this carbon-rich environment, further contaminating the water supply for millions of animals. As Firestone, West, and Warwick-Smith put it, "dense blue-green mats of algae choked the ponds, streams and rivers, and as the algae died, they drifted down to clog the bottoms. . . . All

over the continents thick black mats formed."[31]

Similarly, the Greenland ice cores record a peak in ammonium concentrations at about thirteen thousand years ago, likely the result of acid rains, but also possibly originating from the impactor itself. The toxic brew of acid rains and ammonium released into the atmosphere would have burned into the flesh of animals and eaten holes through the leaves of plants, thus effectively contributing to the wholesale extinction of plant and animal life, even in those regions not directly affected by the impacts.

Amid the general devastation, the animals that fared the best were the small scavengers, omnivores, and rodents. Human populations were decimated. It might have taken hundreds or thousands of years for population levels to recover. Even then, entire areas of our planet, particularly at the more northern latitudes, remained largely devoid of plant and animal life.

Mystery of the Bays

The so-called Carolina Bays are another key piece of evidence in the puzzle of the Younger Dryas extinction. These are shallow, elliptical depressions ranging from 50 meters (164 feet) to over 7 kilometers (4.3 miles) in diameter, found throughout much of the eastern United States and into the Midwest as far as Kansas and Nebraska. It is estimated that over fifty thousand of these "bays" might exist in the continental United States alone. Nearly all bays in the East Coast arc appear to be aligned in a northwest-southeast direction, yet they are generally too shallow to be actual impact craters.

Their formation could be the result of multiple airbursts occurring at very high altitude or the fallout of ejecta from one of the main impacts over North America. A crucial element in favor of the latter hypothesis is the peculiar northwest-southeast orientation of the bays in the East Coast arc, which all seem to point to an impact site to the west of the Great Lakes region. The most likely explanation for the formation of the bays is thus that the primary impacts on the Laurentide Ice Sheet generated a number of secondary projectiles consisting largely of "ultrasonic slushballs" that left distinctive craterlike marks on soft, alluvial soils, but not on harder, rocky surfaces.[32] Even so, these secondary impactors would have been capable of generating enough heat to kill virtually all flora and fauna along the entire eastern half of

North America.[33]

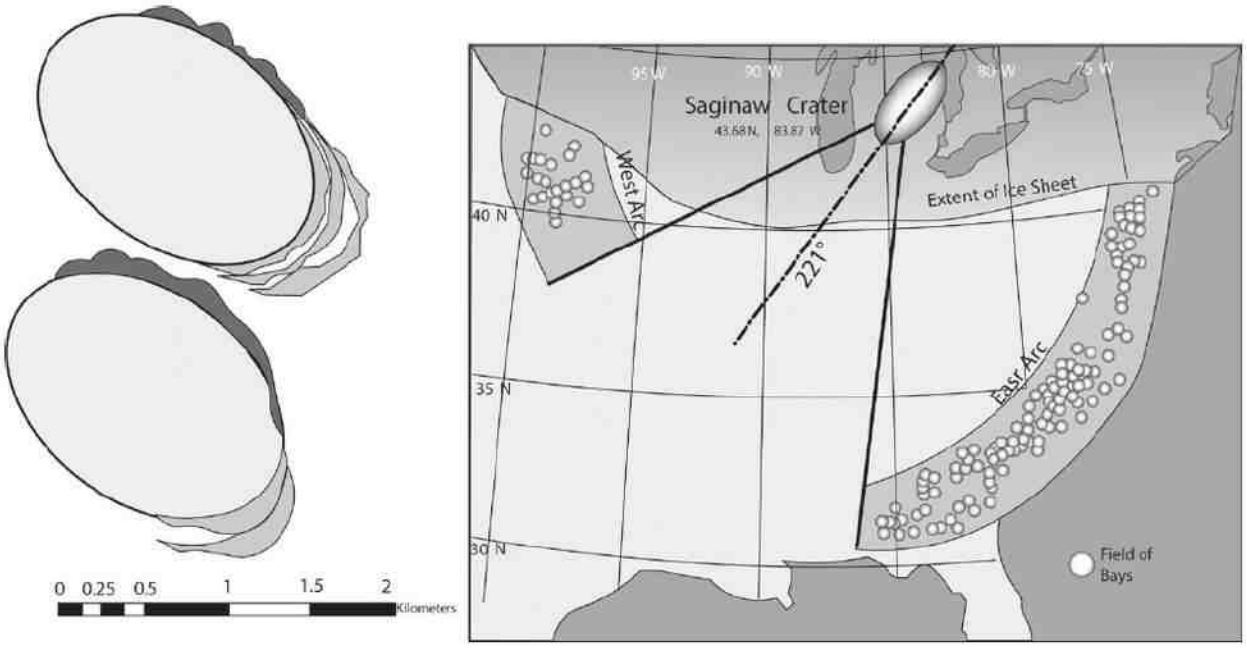

Figure 7.2. Diagram of a typical Carolina Bay crater (left) and butterfly formation of ejecta from hypothetical Saginaw Bay impact (right) (after Davias, 2011, Cintos Research). Researcher Michael Davias believes that an impact site compatible with the distribution and orientation of the bays would be located near the Saginaw Bay area of Michigan, in the Great Lakes region of North America. Unlike Firestone, Kennett, and West, Davias believes the impact responsible for the Carolina Bays formation does not date to the Younger Dryas, but is at least 800,000 years old.

According to researcher Michael Davias, who first developed a computer model of the orientation of nearly two hundred Carolina Bays in 2010, all the known bays' orientations distinctly point to a primary impact site located in the Great Lakes region of North America.[34] He suggests that there is a likely impact site in Saginaw Bay within Lake Huron.

Further research by Firestone, West, and Warwick-Smith, however, suggests at least two different likely impact sites over North America: one near Lake Michigan and the other in northern Canada. "Some of the lines

point to Lake Michigan," they observe, "while the remaining lines point towards Canada. . . . When we extend those lines, we find that they converge near another giant bay-shaped feature, Hudson Bay."[35]

Could Hudson Bay be the missing crater left by the Younger Dryas comet? With a diameter of over 1,100 kilometers (700 miles), Hudson Bay could turn out to be *the largest impact crater on Earth.* Moreover, Firestone, West, and Warwick-Smith suggest that smaller fragments of the original comet might have impacted Europe, South America, Siberia, and Scandinavia, causing a veritable bombardment from which few living creatures, either plant or animal, could have escaped.[36]

Dirty Snowballs

With respect to the nature of the impactor, comets differ from asteroids in that they consist mostly of ice and other frozen gases, such as carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide, methane, and ammonia. Because of their volatile composition, comets may be better described as "dirty snowballs," and they are far more likely than asteroids to disintegrate when approaching the gravitational field of a larger celestial body.

The origin of comets is still poorly understood, but it is likely that most long-period comets (those with orbital periods longer than two hundred years) could originate from a region of space known as the Oort Cloud, located at a distance of up to 0.79 light years from Earth, or nearly one-third of the distance between the sun and its nearest star.

The Oort Cloud is believed to contain *trillions* of objects larger than 1 mile and *billions* with diameters greater than 20 kilometers (12 miles). Gravitational pull from nearby stars and galactic tides can modify the orbits of objects within the Oort Cloud and put them on a collision course with the sun and the inner planets.

Could a giant celestial body at the fringes of the solar system be responsible for the periodic perturbations observed in the orbits of longperiod comets?[37]

Walter Cruttenden's binary star hypothesis may provide a credible mechanism to explain the apparently cyclical nature of terrestrial cataclysms. In this case, the close passage of a still-undetected companion star to our sun

in the vicinity of the Oort Cloud would account for the high eccentricity of the orbits of long-period comets and push a number of those on a potentially dangerous collision course with the Earth.

ALONG CAME THE FLOOD

The most recent research suggests that a single object measuring up to 100 kilometers (62 miles) across might have broken up into several fragments upon entering the Earth's atmosphere at the Younger Dryas boundary, causing numerous airbursts and high-altitude explosions, with devastating consequences for nearly every form of life on the planet.[38] Although only the largest fragments would have reached the surface, secondary ejecta from these impacts would have traveled hundreds of miles at ultrasonic speed to form thousands of secondary impact craters along the Eastern Seaboard and the Midwest of North America. The resulting strewn field would have blanketed an area of nearly 50 million square kilometers (19.3 million square miles), or 10 percent of the entire planet.

At that time, 12,900 years ago, much of North America as far south as the Great Lakes Region was still covered by two great ice caps, called the Cordilleran and Laurentide Ice Sheets, with thicknesses of as many as 2 to 3 kilometers (1.2 to 1.9 miles).

When the main impactors hit the Laurentide Ice Sheet, the combined heat turned millions of tons of ice into water, which was sent coursing down toward the sea from a myriad of valleys and riverbeds, carving its way through the landscape with a force hardly paralleled by even the largest floods of today. Wave after wave of frigid meltwater quickly filled the glacial lakes at the edge of the great Cordilleran and Laurentide Ice Sheets. As the lakes filled and overflowed, their glacial dams collapsed, unleashing even more gigantic floods. Sea levels rose by several meters in a space of weeks, inundating coastal areas around the world.[39]

A volume of water sufficient to cover all of Canada, the United States, and Mexico was suddenly released from glacial Lake Agassiz alone. When the dams of another glacial lake, Lake Missoula, failed abruptly, they sent a monstrous flood down through the Columbia River basin, releasing within hours as much water as there is presently in all of Lake Erie.[40] In certain

areas, the floodwaters might have reached depths of up to 300 meters (984 feet), creating huge waterfalls at least three times as high and more than six times as wide as Niagara Falls.[41] This was quite possibly the largest flood in the history of the world.

The Myth of the Ice Ages

For well over a century, scientists have entertained the idea of recurring ice ages to explain the anomalous evidence from erratic boulders and drift sediments found throughout the world. The most common explanation for their presence is that they were deposited by now vanished glaciers at a time when immense ice caps covered virtually the whole of Europe and North America as far south as the latitudes of New York, London, and Berlin. Yet this theory could not explain the contemporaneous existence of largely unglaciated patches at latitudes even farther north, or the presence of the same type of rock striations and drift deposits in areas very close to the tropics or the equator, including Africa, Madagascar, India, South America, and even Australia.[42] In some cases, the direction of the striations appears to suggest that the alleged glaciers flowed from the tropics to higher latitudes.[43] There is also no consensus on how these huge ice caps could have formed in the first place or on the mechanism that could explain such a drop in global temperatures. In the opinion of geologists D. S. Allan and J. B. Delair, the idea of continental ice caps slowly retreating and advancing over thousands of years down to normally temperate latitudes is more or less a physical impossibility, a “wonderful myth” that is openly contradicted by all the available evidence.[44]

If the ice ages never existed, what then could have been responsible for the many perplexing geological formations that they are typically associated with?

For Allan and Delair, the answer to this question is unequivocally *water:* an immense deluge of near biblical proportions, accompanied by frightful volcanic and atmospheric disturbances. “Wind, water, mud-slides and various volcanic actions,” they argue, should be recognized as “equally capable of scoring and striating rocks.” Such agents are also the only credible explanation for the presence of extensive drift deposits and erratic boulders in the tropical and equatorial regions of our planet, far beyond the reach of even

the most massive ice sheets.[45]

In the aftermath of a cometary impact, hurricane-force winds would sweep the entire planet, traveling at hundreds of miles per hour. Blast waves of superheated air quickly expanding outward from the impact site and racing across the landscape would have the ability to scour and striate rocks, moving as a veritable *nuée ardente* at speeds of over 700 kilometers (435 miles) per hour. Immense earthquakes and volcanic eruptions would profoundly alter the landscape, even in areas of the planet not directly affected by the impacts, causing the land to rise or sink by hundreds of yards. Immense tsunamis and underwater mudslides triggered by these earthquakes would then further devastate coastlines around the world. If the impacts occurred over the polar ice caps, millions of cubic miles of ice would be instantly turned into water. In the following weeks and months, acid rains, forest fires, and a deranged atmosphere loaded with water vapor and toxic chemicals would cause even deeper physical and chemical alterations to the exposed rock surfaces, resulting in intense weathering.

The cometary impacts at the beginning of the Younger Dryas certainly produced enough heat and evaporation to bring torrential rainfalls and huge snow accumulations over much of the planet. As worldwide temperatures dropped, vast ice caps several miles thick formed over much of Europe and North America.

POLE SHIFT?

It was not until the late 1950s that Professor Charles Hapgood formulated his famous Earth Crustal Displacement theory in the book *The Path of the Pole*. According to Hapgood, the only reasonable explanation for the existence of large continental ice caps over presently temperate or even tropical regions is that these areas were formerly located much closer to the poles and only moved to their present latitudes as a consequence of crustal displacement. According to Hapgood, there never was a global Ice Age, but a sequence of pole shifts that caused the melting and formation of new ice caps near the poles.

Hapgood remained throughout his life an agnostic with respect to the possible causes of such crustal displacements. Ever since Hapgood’s first

formulation of his theory, several authors have suggested that only the energy of a large celestial impactor could have been able to overcome the immense forces that normally hold together the crust and the mantle in such a way as to cause a displacement of the earth's crust. A comet hitting the Laurentide Ice Sheet at a very low angle, at a time when the North Pole was located near the present-day Hudson's Bay, could very well fit this picture of the energy required.

Allan and Delair further believe that such an impact also might have altered the Earth's own axis of rotation. They write, "Biological evidence suggests that before that event Earth's climate was almost certainly more genial than at present, and was conducive to a remarkable proliferation of plant and animal life—even in latitudes now decidedly polar. . . . Such a regime could have existed only if the Earth rotated more perpendicularly."[46]

Only a more perpendicular axis of rotation would have allowed for the incredible proliferation of flora and fauna recorded in the fossil record and cave art of Europe and North America, where the woolly mammoth is shown side by side with the hippopotamus, the reindeer with the rhinoceros, the lion with the bear, and the horse with the buffalo and the deer.

An axial shift on the scale proposed by Allan and Delair would have triggered devastating earthquakes as our planet adjusted to the new axis of rotation. Some areas of the Earth's surface would have been uplifted, while others would have sunk due to gravitational and centrifugal forces. The whole body of the Earth's oceans would have been similarly displaced, with immense tidal waves advancing and retreating for hundreds of miles in the interior of continents. Deeper beneath the Earth, the attrition generated in the mantle would have altered the flow of the Earth's magnetic currents, leading to an inversion of the magnetic poles. Evidence shows that the end of the Pleistocene epoch was accompanied by wide fluctuations in the Earth's magnetic field, such as to cause the magnetic North Pole to briefly approach the equator.[47]

After the cataclysm, the world would never be the same again, its face transformed forever. Formerly temperate lands became suddenly covered in ice, whereas former polar regions, as in much of North America, began to benefit from a much more temperate climate.

THE LONG WINTER OF THE WORLD

In the immediate aftermath of the cataclysm, global temperatures plunged on account of the nearly permanent cloud cover caused by the water vapor and dust released by the impacts.

In the Persian *Bundahishn*, we read that an "evil spirit . . . sprang like a snake out of the sky down to the Earth," making the world "quite as injured and dark at midday as though it were dark night."[48] A very similar image is found in the Edfu Building Texts. Another Zoroastrian text, the Vendidad, alludes to the attack of a snake on the paradisiacal land Airyana Vaejo, as a result of which this "first of the good lands and countries" was plunged into a perpetual winter, no longer enjoying its eternal spring, but "ten months of winter and two months of summer."[49]

On the opposite side of the Atlantic, the memory of the cataclysm was preserved in the Flood myths of countless Indian tribes and civilized nations. For instance, the Popol Vuh of the Quiché Maya speaks of the "thick resin" that fell from the sky after a great deluge in which all of humanity perished and the face of the Earth darkened. A Choctaw myth similarly describes a "great thunder" and a "terrible earthquake" that shook the world and caused a mountain of water to rush over the land from the north, after which the sun darkened and a deep freeze fell over the land.

Ancient cosmologies are replete with similar images of the sky falling down to the Earth's surface, the world axis crumbling, and the stars coming adrift in the sky or dropping into the void. These are all clear allusions to a change in the declination of the celestial sphere such as would have followed a change in the Earth's axis of rotation, causing certain stars to seemingly rise and others to sink below the horizon from the perspective of an Earth-based observer.

About 12,900 years ago, new ice caps started to form over previously temperate regions across northern Europe, Siberia, and Alaska. Global temperatures dropped, causing snow to fall thickly as far south as Mexico, the Caribbean, and North Africa. Closer to the equator, the snow turned to rain, continuing "day after day, stretching into weeks and then into months" as the oversaturated atmosphere released its burden.[50] Extremely cold temperatures might have persisted around the globe for nearly a thousand

years, with ocean temperatures falling by as many as 6°C to 7°C (10.8°F to 12.6°F) and atmospheric temperatures by 15°C (27°F) or more.

Massive migrations of people and animals would have taken place through much of the Northern Hemisphere toward more southern latitudes, and vast areas of our planet would have been left entirely uninhabited, the few survivors forced into increasingly extreme forms of adaptation. Had there been an advanced civilization on Earth at this time, it would have been utterly destroyed.

Some former coastlines were upheaved, while others sank deep beneath the world's oceans. Mountain ranges rose where previously there were none as volcanoes around the planet erupted and frightful earthquakes rattled the continents.[51] A great landmass sank in the North Atlantic, while the vast inland sea that once extended over much of the Gobi desert dried up. *The face of our planet was changed forever.* Unlike previous extinctions, however, the cataclysm of 12,900 BCE was not without witnesses. Intelligent human beings already walked our planet, and they would forever after preserve the memory of the terrible day when the sky fell and the Earth nearly died.

8

SURVIVING THE APOCALYPSE

Several mythical accounts and traditions describe the manner in which humanity managed to survive the worldwide cataclysms of the end of the last ice age. These stories often involve a boat, a cave, or a high mountain peak that is somehow miraculously spared by the scorching heat or by the raging waters. The specific details vary, however, depending on where the survivors lived and their level of civilization. This chapter will examine some of these accounts in an attempt to reconstruct not only how mankind survived through the cataclysm but also the means by which many of the great scientific and technological achievements of Atlantean civilization were thus saved from destruction for the benefit of future generations.

NOAH AND THE ARKS

Most people will be familiar with the biblical story of Noah, who, warned by God of an impending deluge that would destroy all mankind, built a giant ship to save himself and his family together with a pair of every living animal. Fewer will know that this story, which forms part of the biblical book of Genesis, likely originated in Mesopotamia almost 1,500 years before the Bible was written. The Sumerian Epic of Gilgamesh and the poem of Atra-Hasis both contain separate flood stories whose earliest composition may

date back to the early third millennium BCE. Over six hundred world mythologies contain some version of this same account.

What truly sets the biblical and Mesopotamian narratives apart from the others, however, is the description of what appears to be a concerted effort for survival involving not only humans but also plants and animals. Unlike the Greek myth of Pyrrha and Deucalion, for example, where the ark was a simple chest that floated over the waters for nine days before landing on Mount Parnassus,[1] Noah's Ark was an enormous vessel comparable to the largest ships of today. Its dimensions were impressive: "three hundred cubits long, fifty cubits wide and thirty cubits high," or about 150 meters (492 feet) long by 25 meters (82 feet) wide and 15 meters (49 feet) high. It was made of the enigmatic material *gopher*, which gave the Ark its polished or laminated appearance. According to Genesis, the Ark itself was entirely roofed and contained three decks. It also possessed a "door" and a "window" that could be opened and closed. Jewish legends further add that the interior of the Ark was illuminated by "precious stones" whose light was "more brilliant by night than by day."[2] This would prove necessary, since the Ark was to sail in complete darkness during the 40 days that the Flood lasted and the 150 days before the waters began to subside. During all this time, no sun or moon could be seen in the sky.[3]

God instructed Noah to bring into the Ark "two of all living creatures, male and female, to keep them alive," along with "every kind of food that is to be eaten and stored away," for the Flood would destroy "all life under the heavens, every creature that has the breath of life."[4]

Very similar details are given in the Sumerian Flood story. The poem of Atra-Hasis describes the Ark as possessing a roof "like the Apsu [i.e., the Abyss] . . . so that the Sun shall not see inside her." It was roofed "above and below" in a way that is reminiscent of a submersible vessel and equipped with a strong gear and firm pitch to give it strength. Another clay tablet describes it as being *round*, with equal length and breadth.[5] In the Epic of Gilgamesh, its dimensions are given as 120 cubits long by 120 cubits wide (60 meters by 60 meters, or 197 feet by 197 feet). It contained six covered decks, divided into nine compartments. Even more astonishing dimensions are given by Berossus, who stated that the length of the Ark was 5 stadia, or nearly 1 kilometer (0.6 mile). The same author claimed that parts of the Ark could still be seen on the Gordyean Mountains of Armenia.

Also of interest is the belief in the fact that the Ark came to rest on a high mountain summit after the Flood. Whether it is the Mount Ararat of Genesis, Mount Nisir of Mesopotamian tradition, or Mount Malaya of the Hindu *Matsya Purana*, what these mountains have in common is that they all reach altitudes of between 2,500 and 3,000 meters (1.5 and 1.9 miles). This was either the level reached by the waters during the Flood or a measure of the geological upheavals to which these mountains were subjected within the last 12,900 years.

YAMSHED AND THE VARA

A most interesting variant of the familiar story of Noah and the Ark is contained in the Vendidad section of the Zoroastrian sacred book, the Avesta. Yamshed (or Yima), the Persian Flood hero, is warned by Ahura Mazda of the coming of a fatal winter and a flood that would fall on the material world. He is instructed to build a Vara, an underground enclosure, where he should store the seeds of men and women, animals and fruits, "the greatest, best and finest on the Earth." The Vara was to be provided with running water, food, and "green that never fails" for the sustenance of men and beasts. Its measures would be "a riding ground" of nearly 3 kilometers (1.9 miles) on every side, and it should contain nine levels below ground, "six in the middle part and three in the smallest," capable of housing 5,700 men and women.[*23] A "window . . . selfshining within" would illuminate the Vara, which would be otherwise completely sealed inside and out.[6] As author Graham Hancock aptly observes, there is something strangely technological in the description of the Vara, reminiscent "in an almost high-tech sense . . . of the specifications of a seed-bank."[7]

The Vara would remain in existence for thousands of years after the Flood. Zarathustra (said to have lived around 600 BCE) would be shown by the god Ahura Mazda a vision of the ancient Vara, where the forefathers of the Aryans still lived in a blessed state and would continue to do so until the end time of the world.

For all its anachronistic descriptions, the Vendidad is not alone in describing a seemingly technological underworld from which the ancestors of present-day humanity emerged to repopulate the world after a great

cataclysm; for also in the Edfu Building Texts, the “Underworld” of the primeval island is the place from whence a second generation of creator gods was said to have emerged.

New World mythologies are also replete with traditions describing how the ancestors of the different Indian tribes moved underground at the time of the last Deluge. The Aztecs of Mexico remembered a time when their forefathers departed Chicomoztoc, the “Place of the Seven Caves” under the mountain Culhuacan, to settle in the Valley of Mexico. A similar story was collected among the Incas of Peru by the learned Jesuit father Bernabé Cobo (1582–1657). According to this story, the ancestors of the Incas emerged from the cave of Pacarictampu after a great Flood in which all of humanity perished. This cave was said to have possessed three openings or windows and long underground passages that extended a great distance under the earth, as far as Lake Titicaca.[8] Farther north, in the territories of Arizona and New Mexico, the Hopi tribe recalls not one but two destructions of the world, one by fire and the other by ice. In both cases, their ancestors were protected by the Ant People in vast underground caverns, where they received abundant food and sustenance to live through each cataclysm. Just like the Aztecs, the Hopi also preserved a myth of the sinking and destruction of their primeval homeland, which they identified with a very large island in the Pacific Ocean called Kásskara.

ANTEDILUVIAN LIBRARIES

Ancient traditions further suggest that it was not only selected groups of people, animals, and plants that were preserved through the cataclysm, but also much of the scientific and technological achievements of the antediluvian world.

According to the Babylonian priest Berossus, the god Enki had ordered the Mesopotamian Flood-hero Xisuthros to bury together all the sacred writings “and hide them in Sippar, the City of the Sun”; and that, after the Flood, he should “return to the city of Sippar, to dig up the tablets that were buried there and to turn them over to mankind.”[9] With the knowledge contained in the tablets, the survivors built many cities, erected temples to the gods, and renewed Babylonia again.

There may be a connection between the writings said to have been buried at Sippar before the Flood and the mysterious and untranslatable *me* found in Sumerian inscriptions. John A. Halloran's *Sumerian Lexicon* defines a *me* as "a decree of the Gods . . . that is foundational to those social institutions, religious practices, technologies, behaviors, mores and human conditions that make civilization possible."[10]

In a poem called "The Transfer of the Arts of Civilization from Eridu to Uruk," dating from 2000 BCE, the goddess Inanna steals the *me* from a drunken Enki and takes them on a "boat of heaven" to her own city of Uruk.[11] Among the contents of the stolen *mes* were instructions of a clearly technological character, including the arts of metalworking, writing, building, and toolmaking. Their original location was said to have been the E-Abzu, the "House of the Abyss," in which the god Ea, or Enki, resided in Eridu surrounded by the primeval waters. If we give credit to the Sumerian King List (WB-444), according to which Uruk was founded in 9851 BCE, and consider Eridu (the "Home Faraway Built") to be another name for Atlantis, then the poem might refer to the transfer of a set of records from Atlantis to Mesopotamia a mere two centuries before the date of Plato's Atlantean cataclysm.

A similar story is found in Ginzberg's *Legends of the Jews* concerning a book "made of sapphires," from which Noah acquired all the knowledge that he required for building the Ark. The mysterious book was first given by the angel Raziel to Adam, who then hid it in a cave whose location was later revealed to Enoch in a dream. It was from this book that "Enoch drew his knowledge of nature, of the earth and of the heavens."[12] After the Flood, the book was passed down from generation to generation until the time of Solomon. Another version of this same legend concerning the origin of the wisdom of Solomon is given by Masonic historian Manly P. Hall in his 1928 book *The Secret Teachings of All Ages.* According to Hall, it was Enoch who

> fearing that all knowledge of the sacred Mysteries would be lost at the time of the Deluge, erected two columns. . . . Upon the metal column he engraved the secret teaching and upon the marble column placed an inscription stating that a short distance away a priceless treasure would be discovered in a subterranean vault. . . . In time, the location of the secret vaults was lost, but after the lapse of ages there

> came another builder [i.e., King Solomon] and he, while laying the foundations of another Temple to the Great Architect of the Universe, discovered the long-lost vaults and the secrets contained therein.[13]

According to Hall, the subterranean vaults were located on Mount Moriah and consisted of *nine* superimposed chambers. The reference to the two pillars or columns is taken directly from the works of the classical historian Flavius Josephus (first century CE), who wrote that the Children of Seth

> were also the inventors of that peculiar sort of wisdom which is concerned with the heavenly bodies and their order. . . . And that their inventions might not be lost before they were sufficiently known, upon Adam's prediction that the world was to be destroyed at one time by the force of fire, and at another time by the violence and quantity of water, they made two pillars, the one of brick, the other of stone: they inscribed their discoveries on them both, that in case the pillar of brick should be destroyed by the flood, the pillar of stone might remain, and exhibit those discoveries to mankind; and also inform them that there was another pillar of brick erected by them. Now this remains in the land of Siriad [i.e., Egypt] to this day.[14]

Interestingly, the Greek word used by Josephus for "pillar" is *πυραμος* or *pyramos,* which has been taken by many as a reference to the Great Pyramid of Egypt. The same legend is repeated across several Gnostic texts of late classical and early medieval times, including the fourth-century-CE Legend of Adam and Eve and the third-century treatise The Three Stele of Seth.

Another fourth-century author, the Roman historian Ammianus Marcellinus, similarly speaks of the "subterranean fissures" and "winding passages. . . . called Syringes," of which, it is said, "those acquainted with the ancient rites, since they had fore-knowledge that a deluge was coming, and feared that the memory of their ceremonies might be destroyed, dug in the earth in many places with great labour; and on the walls of these caverns they carved many kinds of birds and beasts, and those countless forms of animals which they called hieroglyphic writing."[15]

The Arab historians of the Middle Ages repeated many of these legends

in their chapters on the pyramids and temples of Egypt, which they held to be repositories of antediluvian knowledge. Among them, Al-Mas'udi (d. 967 CE) told a story of the construction of the Great Pyramid by the antediluvian king Surid, following a dream in which "the earth was overthrown . . . the stars wandered confusedly from their courses and clashed together with tremendous noise."[16]

Inside the Pyramid, the king ordered the priests to collect "written accounts of their wisdom and acquirements in the different arts and sciences . . . that they might remain as records, for the benefit of those who would afterwards comprehend them."[17]

Across the Atlantic, the sixteenth-century friar Bernardino de Sahagún was told a similar story according to which the god Quetzalcoatl, before setting sail on the Eastern Sea, had buried his treasures inside "a house . . . all underground, at a place called Mictlan."[18] In a related fashion, the seventeenth-century bishop of Chiapas, Francisco Nuñez de la Vega, picked up from among the Tzeltal people the legend of a great ancient temple, a "House of Darkness," known for its subterranean chambers, where the hero Votan had buried the sacred records of his race. These records had been brought by Votan to the city of Huehuetan by way of the Usumacinta River from a mysterious island kingdom to the East called Valum Votan, which the early Mayanist Brasseur de Bourbourg identified with Plato's Atlantis.[19]

All these legends have at their common core the belief in the existence of a body of divine knowledge that was somehow preserved through the Flood for the benefit of a future humanity. The rediscovery of the records of antediluvian civilizations is also a theme that would feature prominently in twentieth-century occultism, and particularly in the writings of the American mystic Edgar Cayce.

Cayce's Three Halls of Records

Several of Cayce's famous readings, which were dictated while he was in a state of trance, describe the construction of three "Halls of Records," great repositories of knowledge built at different locations around the world to preserve the records of Atlantean civilization. The Egyptian Hall of Records, the most famous of the three, was said by Cayce to be located "between the Sphinx and the Pyramids," whereas two more repositories were built in

Yucatan and on Poseidonis (Atlantis) itself.[20]

Little is known of the fate of these three Halls of Records after the destruction of Atlantis. In one reading dated June 18, 1934, Cayce describes the foundation of a great library at a site that can only have been that of the last neo-Atlantean capital of Hierakonpolis, and hence of the future city of Alexandria.[*24] The date of foundation of this library is given by Cayce as "ten thousand three hundred years before the Prince of Peace entered Egypt," that is, in 10,300 BCE.[21] This library would have contained but a portion of the original Atlantean records, yet it was said to be sufficient to form "the greatest collection of manuscripts, of writings, of the various forces, that has ever been known in the world of experience in the earth's plane."[22]

Concerning the Yucatan Hall of Records, there are hints that this, too, like the one built on the island of Poseidonis itself, was destroyed at the time of the last Atlantean cataclysm.[23] The records that it contained, however, were not entirely lost, for according to Cayce, they were "carried to what is now Yucatan in America, where these stones that they know so little about are now—during the last few months—being uncovered."[24]

This last hint in particular seems to point to the site of Piedras Negras, in Guatemala, which was just being excavated in 1933. The nearby site of Yaxchilán (see Plates 6 and 7), also located on the Usumacinta River, would be, however, an equally likely candidate due to the presence of extensive cave systems in its vicinities.

One is certainly free to form his or her own opinion on the reliability of these statements by Cayce, but the similarities they share with several of the esoteric and historical traditions presented in the previous chapters make them at least worthy of consideration.

The Cave of the Ancients

Another one of the locations traditionally associated with the Atlantean records is Tibet. In 1956, a British man called Cyril Henry Hoskin caused a sensation in esoteric circles with the publication of his first book, *The Third Eye,* in which he claimed to be the reincarnation of a Tibetan monk by the name of T. Lobsang Rampa. Remembering his past lives, Hoskin told of the discovery by a group of lamas of an ancient repository of knowledge within a

sealed cave in the Himalayas. This would become the subject of another book, published in 1963 under Rampa's name, called *The Cave of the Ancients.*

The cave contained the records of a vanished race, written on tablets of gold, together with working models of their greatest inventions. There, inside immense halls illuminated from above by a number of suspended globes that cast a soft, silvery light, were "strange machines . . . models of cities and bridges, all formed of some kind of stone or metal" as well as "a complete pictorial record" describing the world of thousands upon thousands of years ago. It was a world of scientific progress, in which "strange machines rolled along, flew inches from the surface of the earth or miles up in the air" and "great temples roared their pinnacles skywards, as if in challenge to the clouds."

But all was not bliss, for the ancient race also mastered the power of the atom, at last detonating a bomb "which all but wrecked the world, causing continents to sink below the oceans and others to rise." Amid the general devastation, however, wise men planned the construction of "time capsules" that could be discovered by later generations in places such as Egypt, Tibet, Siberia, and South America. Immense machines excavated the living rock of what would become the Cave of the Ancients, where "hordes of men installed the models and the machines." Cold-light spheres were hoisted into place to illuminate the halls of this vast antediluvian library, which was equipped with an inexhaustible source of power that would last for millions of years, or "almost until the end of Time itself."[25]

For centuries after the great catastrophe, only wild tribes wandered over the surface of the Earth, telling by the light of their campfires the old legends "of the Flood, of Lemuria and Atlantis . . . and of the day the Sun stood still." The Cave of the Ancients, wrote Rampa, "lay buried in the silt of a half-drowned world. . . . Safe from intruders, it rested far beneath the surface of the land." There, it would sleep in peace "until men of goodwill and high intelligence would come again."[26]

The Abode of the Sages

The idea of ancient time capsules and antediluvian libraries hidden in the mountains of Tibet is by no means a new one. Already in the first century

CE, the Greek neo-Pythagorean philosopher Apollonius of Tyana had embarked on a journey to India in search of the abode of the sages. According to Philostratus, his biographer, this was to be found at the foothills of the Himalayas, "on Earth, yet at the same time outside it . . . fortified without fortifications, and possessing nothing, yet having all the riches of men."[27]

A cloud, floating around the eminence, allowed the sages to make themselves visible or invisible at will, whereas thunderbolts could be hurled from the summit against any intruders foolish enough to attempt to take the place by force.

In the palace of the sages, Apollonius was shown many wonders, including a working model of the solar system contained within the sapphire dome of a temple, magnetic and levitating stones, automatons, glowing lights, and a machine like a "living wheel" designed to instantly deliver messages from place to place.

Apollonius would spend four months in the company of the sages, learning from them "all sorts of lore, both profane and mysterious."[28]

Apollonius' journey to the Indian sages anticipated by nearly two millennia the teachings of Blavatsky concerning the existence of a great lodge of initiates, or *ascended masters,* who occupied a secret location in central Asia. It also bears significant resemblances to Buddhist traditions of Shambhala and to the writings of French occultist Alexandre Saint-Yves d'Alveydre (1842–1909) concerning the secret kingdom of Agharta, with its mysterious and all-powerful "King of the World."

In *The Secret Doctrine,* Blavatsky speaks of the mysterious rock libraries contained within the spurs of the Himalayas, where the Masters live. "In all the large and wealthy lamaseries," she claims, "there are subterranean crypts and cave libraries, cut in the rock, whenever the Gunpa and Lhakhang are situated in the mountains. . . . Beyond the western Tsay-dam, in the solitary passes of Kuen-Lun."[29]

There, a little village at the entrance of a deep gorge, truly no more than a hamlet consisting of a few houses and a poor-looking temple, marks the site of one of the largest libraries in the world. Inside its subterranean halls and galleries, deep underneath the Earth, lies "a collection of books the number of which is too large to find room even in the British Museum."[30] Likewise, in

the now desolate and waterless Tarim Basin may be found “immense subterranean abodes. . . . of large corridors, filled with tiles and cylinders,” where many wealthy and flourishing cities once stood but now lie buried under the always moving sands.[31]

Saint-Yves d’Alveydre wrote at length about these tunnels, which he said formed a titanic labyrinth throughout central Asia. He assured his readers that “the libraries that contain the true body of all the ancient arts and sciences of the last five hundred and fifty-six centuries are inaccessible to any profane sight or any manner of attack,” concealed as they are “in the bowels of the earth.”[32]

In truth, observed Saint-Yves d’Alveydre, the branches of this planetary library extend across the entire planet, covering almost every region of the globe like a colossal chessboard. Under the snowy peaks of the Himalayas lies the inaccessible sacred center, the “brain” of this planetary archive, which is only to be found “among the twenty-two temples representing the twenty-two mysteries of Hermes and the twenty-two letters of certain sacred alphabets.”[33]

FORBIDDEN KNOWLEDGE

A vast body of knowledge must have survived from antediluvian times, yet nearly all traces of it seem to mysteriously disappear as we approach the modern age. For Blavatsky, the suppression and concealment of Atlantean knowledge was the work of a postdiluvian elite whose seat is beyond the Himalayas, but whose members may be found among all the main esoteric and mystery schools of India, Tibet, China, Syria, and even South America.[34]

Thus, writes Blavatsky in her introduction to *The Secret Doctrine*, “It has been claimed in all ages that ever since the destruction of the Alexandrian library every work of a character that might have led the profane to the ultimate discovery and comprehension of some of the mysteries of the Secret Science, was, owing to the combined efforts of the members of the Brotherhoods, diligently searched for, and once found, save three copies left and stored safely away . . . destroyed to the last copy.”[35]

The destruction of the Library of Alexandria, of the Chinese royal archives, and of countless other libraries throughout the ancient world was no

accident, for those who knew had already managed to secure the most valuable works and conceal them in safe places, away from the profane. What follows are just a few examples of what may have been concealed.

The Books of Thoth

In the second century CE, the Roman emperor Septimius Severus ordered that "all the books that contained any secret lore" be taken from the sanctuaries and temples of Egypt, Syria, and the East and placed in the tomb of Alexander, so that "no one in the future should read what was written in these books."[36] Before then, it is reasonable to assume that a large number of antediluvian documents still existed in the royal and priestly archives of the major ancient civilization of the Mediterranean and the Near East.

Almost a thousand years earlier, the Assyrian king Assurbanipal II boasted that he could read "the mysterious writings of before the Flood."

A similar tradition also existed in Egypt concerning the original writings of the gods, the secret Books of Thoth, of which nearly every major temple claimed to possess a copy. In the Westcar papyrus, dating to the Second Intermediate Period (1782–1570 BCE), we read of the search by the pharaoh Khufu for the "secret plans of the dwelling of Thoth"— quite possibly a reference to the Great Pyramid. Similarly, the plans for the construction of the temple of Denderah were said to have been contained on parchments "dating back to the time of the Shemsu-Hor."[37] In a like manner, Blavatsky speaks of the labyrinthine subterranean and secret libraries of Ishmonia (El-Ashmunein), the ancient Hermopolis, where only the spirits and the djinn study the literature of the antediluvian ages and learn from the magic scrolls.[38]

According to the Egyptian historian Manetho, the number of the Books of Thoth was 36,625, whereas Clemens of Alexandria ascribed forty-two books to the original Corpus Hermeticum, said to contain the sum total of all the sacred science and wisdom of the Egyptians. Masonic historian Manly P. Hall speaks instead of just one Book of Thoth, which contained the most secret teachings of the Egyptians and was lost to the world with the decay of the mysteries: "Faithful initiates carried it sealed in the sacred casket into another land. . . . The book is still in existence and continues to lead the disciples of this age into the presence of the Immortals."[39]

The Secrets of Enoch

It was only after the fall of the neo-Atlantean Empire that a systematic effort was seemingly undertaken to destroy or conceal every source of access to antediluvian knowledge, lest it be used to reconstitute another Atlantean Empire. Indeed, the possession of this "forbidden" knowledge had allowed Atlantean humanity to "rise to heaven" before the Flood.

It was the antediluvian Watchers, the fallen angels, who, according to the Book of Enoch, initiated early humanity into the arts of civilization. They were the inventors of the arts of writing and metalworking, of the sciences of medicine, chemistry, agriculture, and astronomy.[40] Like the Titan Prometheus, they stole the fire from the gods to give it to mankind, as a result of which humanity was led astray and away from God.

The Flood was therefore as much a punishment for the rebellious Watchers and their hybrid progeny, the Nephilim, as it was an attempt to eradicate all traces of their forbidden knowledge. Thus, we read in the Book of Enoch, "A decree has gone out from the Lord concerning those who live in the Lowlands. . . . they must be destroyed because they have learnt the secrets of the Watchers, and the violence of the Satans with all their secret powers; and the power of those who practice sorcery and witchcraft. . . . Because of the secrets that they have sought out and learnt, the Lowlands, and all who live there, must be destroyed."[41]

Clearly, as the writings of Josephus and a number of other classical sources attest, this attempt at eradicating all traces of antediluvian knowledge was only partially successful; otherwise, it would be impossible to explain its resurgence in the postdiluvian period, at the time of the construction of the Tower of Babel. It appears instead that two rather separate bodies of antediluvian knowledge survived the Flood: one traditionally ascribed to Noah and the Enochian tradition, the other belonging to the Sethian tradition of the Children of Seth, who are identical with the Nephilim and the fallen angels. It was this latter tradition that inspired the builders of the Tower of Babel in their project to constitute a new Atlantean empire and rise in rebellion against God.

In the Gnostic texts, this "God" is in fact merely a demiurge, the malevolent creator of the material world, which is but a "prison" for the soul. In these texts, the Sethites become therefore the custodians of a secret

knowledge that leads to liberation and not to sin. These secrets, which Adam had first learned in heaven after eating from the forbidden fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, were handed down by Seth to his children, who had them transcribed on pillars and stone tablets. The third-centuryCE Gospel of the Egyptians thus mentions a "Book of Seth" as "the book that the great Seth wrote, and placed on high mountains on which the sun has not risen, nor is it possible . . . in the mountain that is called Charaxio, in order that at the end of the times and the eras . . . it may come forth and reveal this incorruptible, holy race of the great savior."[42]

This same mountain is called the Mountain of Victory, or Mons Victorialis in the Syriac Revelation of the Magi. It is, moreover, to this mountain that the Magi ascended every year to pray in silence before the entrance to the Cave of Treasures.[43] According to British science and history writer Andrew Collins, these names and geographic indications all point to a specific place in southeastern Turkey near the ancient city of Harran. As reported by the thirteenth-century Syriac historian Bar Hebraeus, Harran, the classical Carrhae, was where Cainan, a descendant of Noah, found a secret writing containing the teachings of the Watchers and sinned on account of it. The tradition that the Sabeans of Harran kept a copy of the mysterious Books of Seth is also supported by a passage from the Arab tenth-century historian Al-Mas'udi, in which he describes an ancient temple of the Sabeans in which a deep pit led to a library containing all "the history of the world, the science of Heavens and the hidden secret of all things past, present and future."[44] A temple corresponding to Al-Mas'udi's description existed at Sogmatar (see Plate 8), 30 kilometers (19 miles) to the northeast of Harran, in the same general area as Göbekli Tepe, with its hundreds of carved stone pillars dating to between 9600 and 8800 BCE.

If Göbekli Tepe was indeed a temple of the antediluvian Watchers, as Collins suggests, then its location near one of the major centers of classical Hermetism and a fabulous gnostic Hall of Records may not be a coincidence. Rather, it would provide direct evidence of the survival of a large body of antediluvian knowledge for thousands of years in the aftermath of the Younger Dryas cataclysm.

Plate 1. A view of enclosure C at Göbekli Tepe during the 2012 excavation campaign. © Marco M. Vigato.

Plate 2. More T-shaped pillars with depiction of an aurochs at Göbekli Tepe, enclosure A. © Marco M. Vigato.

Plate 3. The two entrance pylons of the Temple of Horus at Edfu. © *Marco M. Vigato.*

Plate 4. The Pyramid of the Feathered Serpent in Xochicalco, carved with unique bas-reliefs featuring undulating serpents and mythological scenes. © *Marco M. Vigato.*

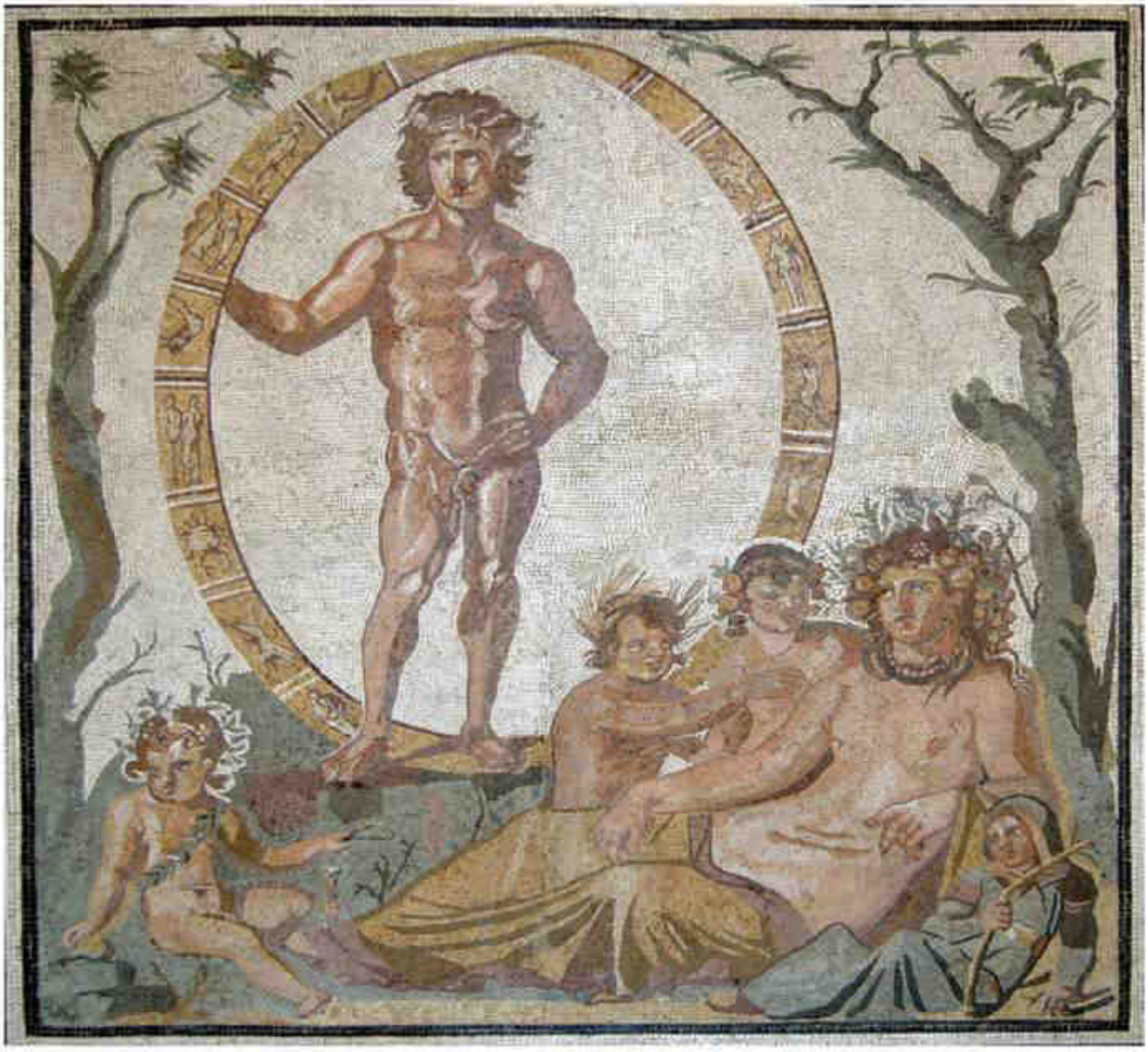

Plate 5. Mosaic depiction of Aion, the Roman god of eternal time, surrounded by the zodiac wheel. Originally from Sassoferrato (ancient Sentinum, Italy). Munich Glyptothek. *Photograph by Bibi Saint-Pol.*

Plate 6. Building 19, known as the Labyrinth, in the ancient Maya city of Yaxchilán, Chiapas. © *Marco M. Vigato.*

Plate 7. The subterranean portion of the Labyrinth of Yaxchilán, with blocked tunnel entrances. © *Marco M. Vigato.*

Plate 8. One of the planetary temples of Sogmatar, near Harran, Turkey. © *Marco M. Vigato.*

Plate 9. The great unfinished obelisk still lying in the quarry at Aswan, Egypt, weighing an estimated 1,200 tons, with author

for scale. © *Alain Vigato.*

Plate 10. Precision granite stonework in the Valley Temple of Khafre at Giza. © *Alain Vigato.*

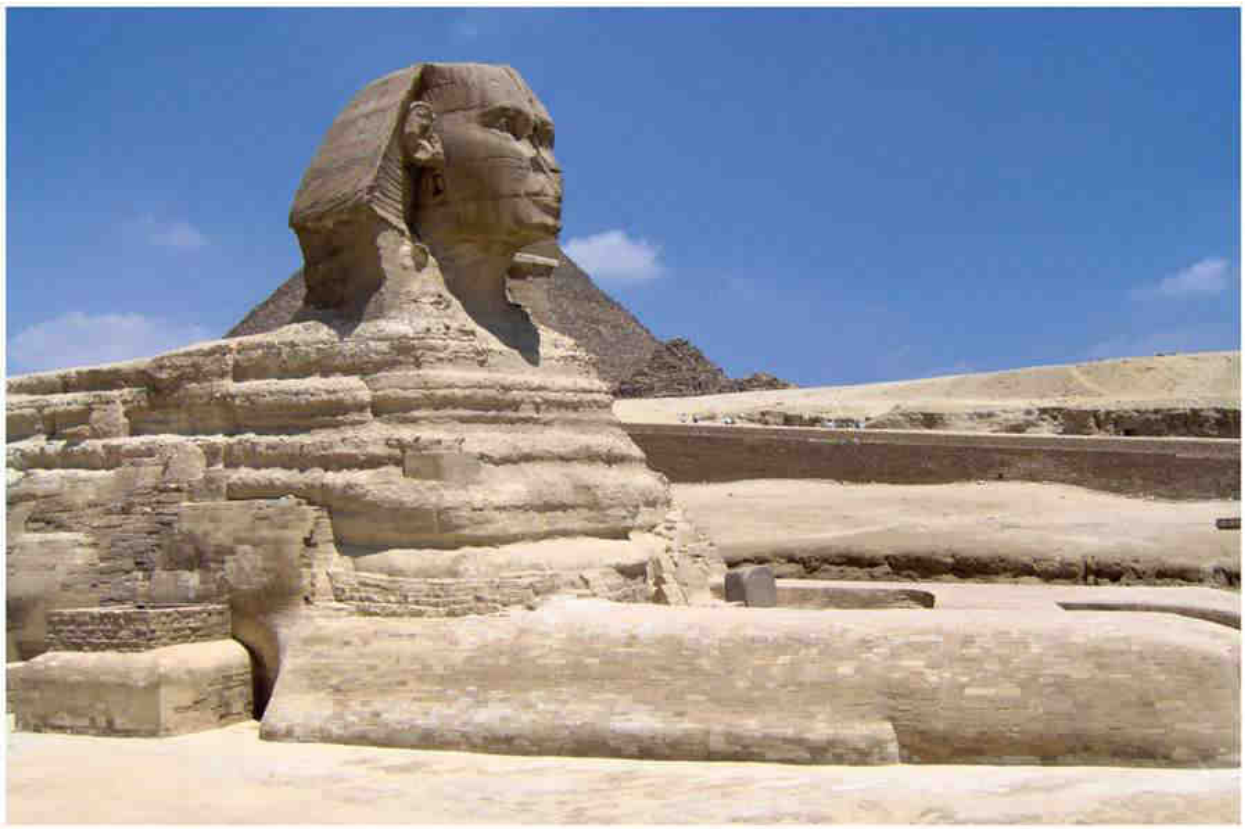

Plate 11. The Great Sphinx of Giza, positioned to gaze toward the spring equinox in Leo in 10,450 BCE. Observe the different levels of erosion on the body and the head, indicating a drastic difference in the age of the carving. © *Marco M. Vigato.*

Plate 12. The Pyramid of Khafre in the morning mist of the Giza Plateau. The Tura limestone casing is still intact on the top portion. © *Marco M. Vigato.*

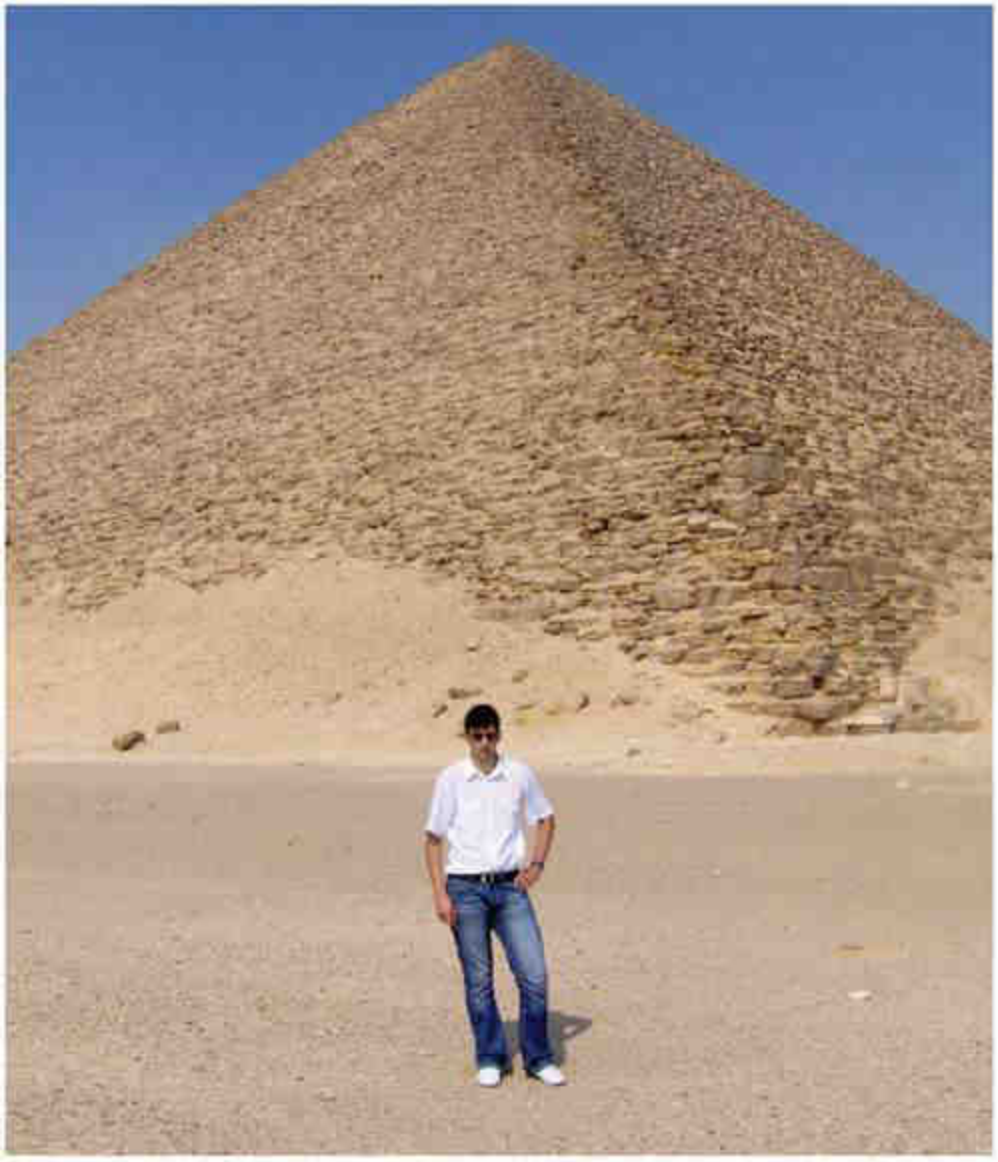

Plate 13. The author standing in front of the Red Pyramid of Dahshur. © *Alain Vigato.*

Plate 14. The almost perfect casing of the Bent Pyramid of Dahshur, with the Red Pyramid in the background. © *Marco M. Vigat*

Plate 15. The unusual towerlike appearance of the Pyramid of Meidum, either a deliberate design feature or a consequence of the pyramid's casing collapse in antiquity. © *Marco M. Vigato.*

Plate 16. The axis of the Temple of Karnak. © *Marco M. Vigato.*

Plate 17. Ruins of the eighth pylon of the Temple of Karnak. Hundreds of statues once decorated the hallways and pylons of the Temple of Karnak. Many of these statues were probably already thousands of years old when they were carried there by later pharaohs, at a time when the technology to re-create similar masterpieces no longer existed. © *Marco M. Vigato.*

Plate 18. Entrance pylons, colossi, and surviving obelisk of the Temple of Luxor, displaying exceptional sophisticated workmanship. It is possible that some of the largest statues and obelisks were repurposed during pharaonic times from earlier structures, with each pharaoh adding his own cartouche

as a way of appropriating these monuments. © *Marco M. Vigato.*

Plate 19. The quartzite colossi of Amenhotep III in west Thebes, weighing an estimated 720 tons each. Although now much ruined and showing evidence of later repairs, these immense statues have withstood the test of time, whereas the temple at whose entrance they once stood has now entirely vanished. © *Marco M. Vigato.*

Plate 20. The massive granite pillars and beams of the Osireion in Abydos. © *Marco M. Vigato.*

Plate 21. The flooded main chamber of the Osireion in Abydos.
© *Marco M. Vigato.*

Plate 22. The largest stone in Jerusalem's Temple Mount, weighing an estimated 570 tons and 13 meters (44 feet) long. © *Marco M. Vigato.*

Plate 23. A section of the Western Wall of Jerusalem's Temple Mount, showing different layers and epochs of construction. © *Marco M. Vigato.*

Plate 24. A view of the Western Wall near the southwest corner of Jerusalem's Temple Mount, showing the Herodian street level and fallen blocks from the Temple destruction in 72 AD. © *Marco M. Vigato.*

Plate 25. Megalithic stonework along the Western Wall of Jerusalem's Temple Mount. © *Marco M. Vigato.*

Plate 26. The much better preserved southwest corner of Jerusalem's Temple Mount, with some immense ashlars. © *Marco M. Vigato.*

Plate 27. The author standing next to the southeast corner of Jerusalem's Temple Mount. Notice the heavily eroded stones and the gap with the adjoining city wall. © *Marco M. Vigato.*

Plate 28. Megalithic foundations of Nimrod's Fortress near Mount Hermon, predating the Crusadeera construction. © *Marco M. Vigato.*

Plate 29. Detail of a megalithic doorway and lintel in Nimrod's Fortress with typical bossed masonry. © *Marco M. Vigato.*

Plate 30. Collapsed portion of a megalithic wall in Nimrod's Fortress, where it is possible to appreciate the contrast between the lower megalithic stone courses and the upper masonry of much smaller stones. © *Marco M. Vigato.*

Plate 31. A view of the Puma Punku temple in Tiwanaku, Bolivia. © *Marco M. Vigato.*

Plate 32. H-shaped, seemingly machined andesitic stone blocks in Puma Punku, Tiwanaku. © *Marco M. Vigato.*

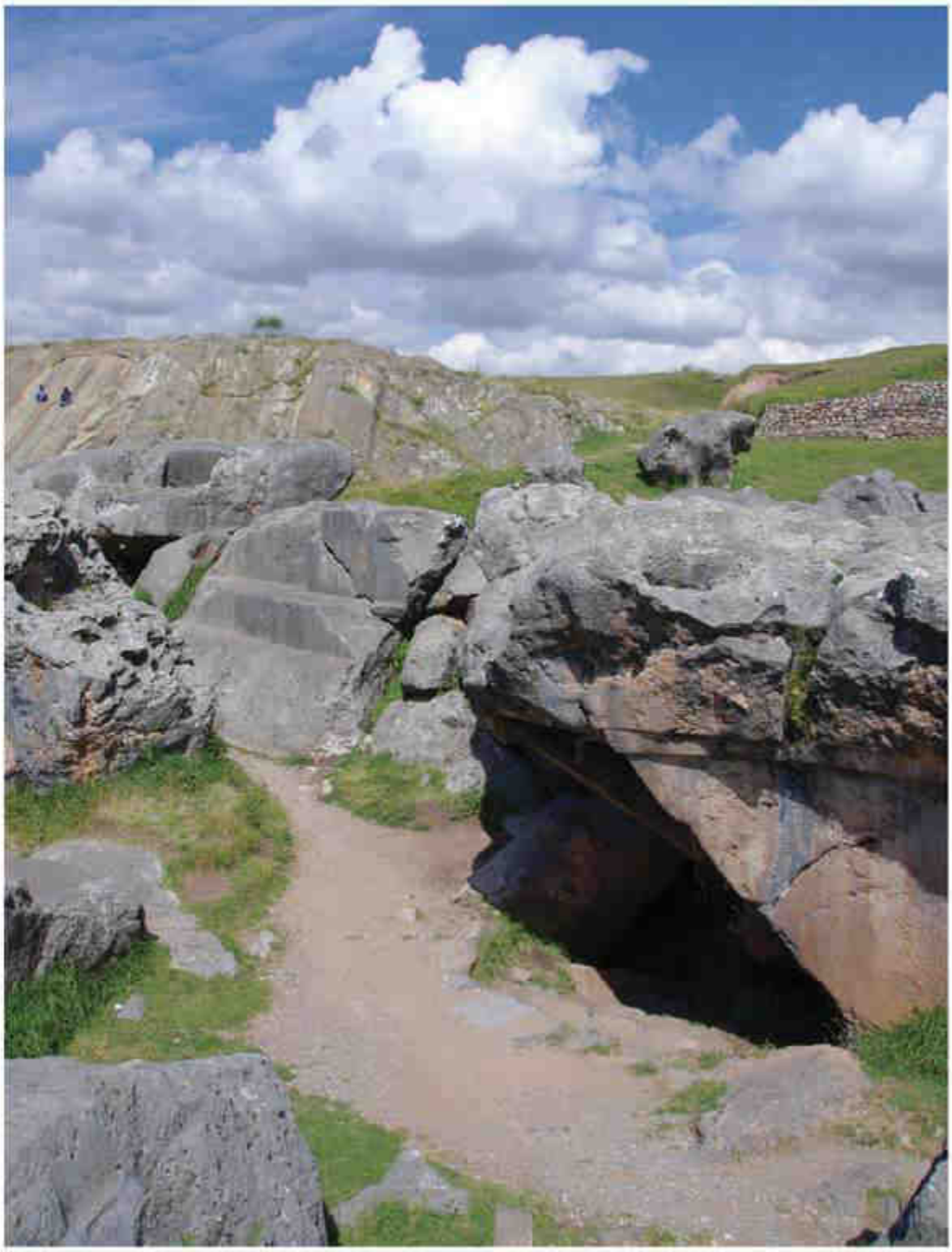

Plate 33. Enormous carved megalithic stone blocks on the hill of Rodadero, facing Sacsayhuaman. © *Marco M. Vigato.*

Plate 34. The curved wall of the Coricancha temple in ancient Cuzco, built of smoothly polished ashlars, with the colonial church of Santo Domingo on top. © *Marco M. Vigato.*

Plate 35. The famous twelve-angled stone in Cuzco, Peru, masterpiece of Andean polygonal stone workmanship. © *Marco M. Vigato.*

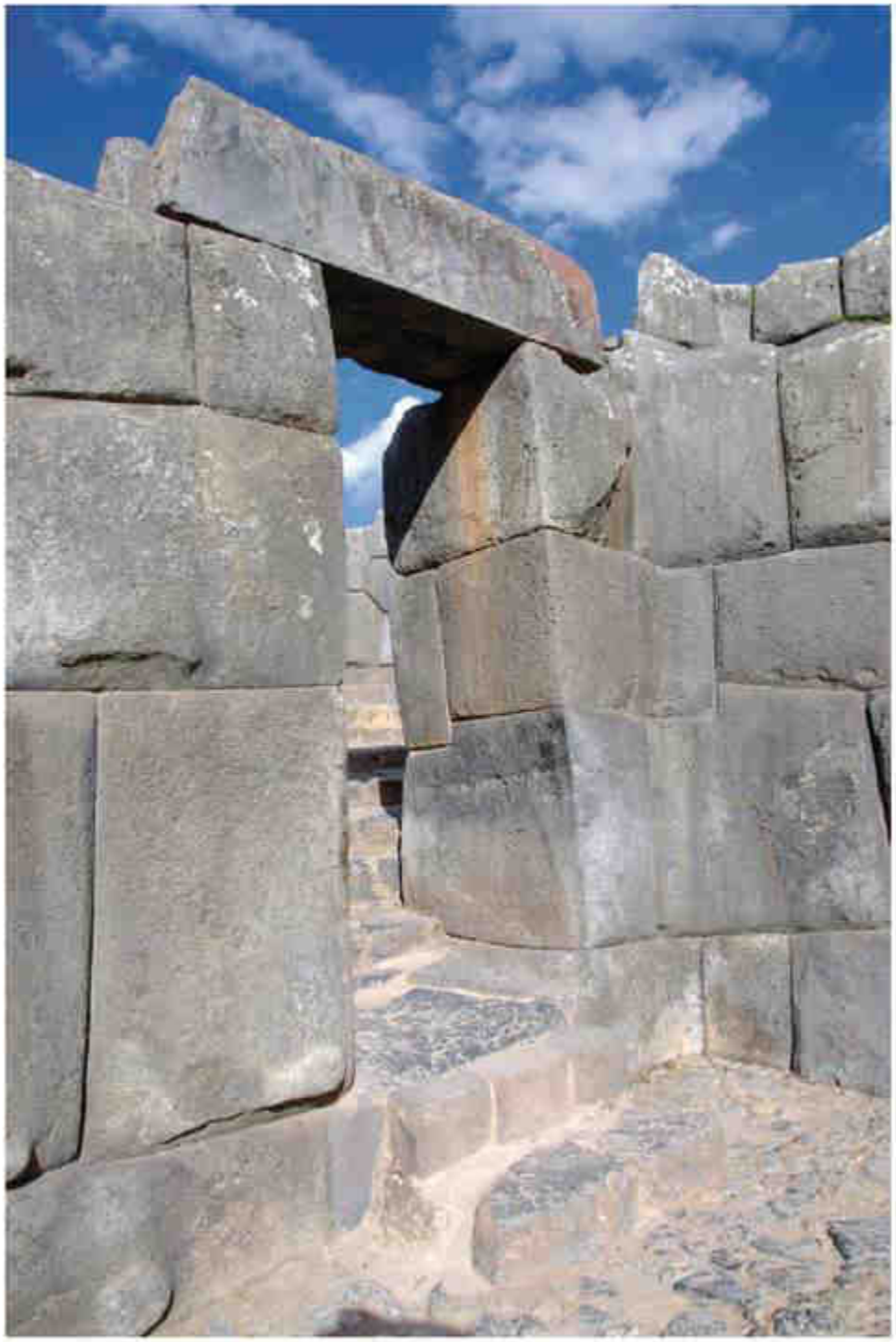

Plate 36. A monumental gateway into the fortress of Sacsayhuaman above Cuzco, Peru. © *Marco M. Vigato.*

Plate 37. Another gateway in the cyclopean ramparts of Sacsayhuaman in Peru. © *Marco M. Vigato.*

Plate 38. The massive and austere megalithic exterior of the Temple of the Three Windows in Machu Picchu. © *Marco M. Vigato.*

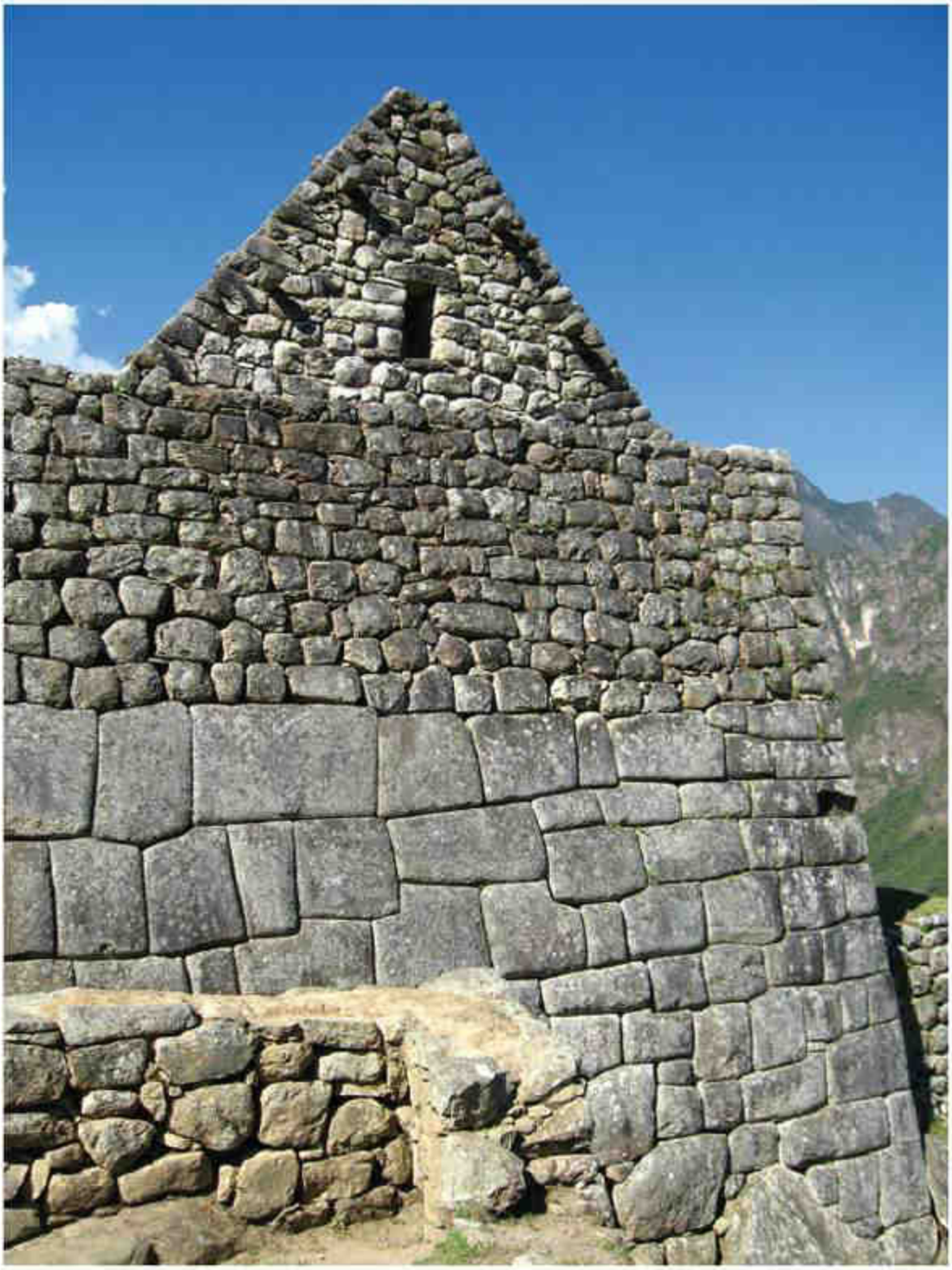

Plate 39. Different styles of construction at Machu Picchu: megalithic polygonal at bottom, Inca on top. © *Marco M.*

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Plate 40. Precision ashlar granite masonry in Machu Picchu, near the Torreón astronomical temple. © *Marco M. Vigato.*

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Plate 45. The Pyramid of Koh Ker, in Cambodia, built in seven steps. © *Marco M. Vigato.*

Plate 46. Aligned stone portals in the temple of Tarxien, Malta.
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Plate 47. The reconstructed façade and curbstones of Newgrange. © *Marco M. Vigato.*

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Plate 50. Polygonal walls in the Acropolis of Alatri, near Rome.
© *Marco M. Vigato.*

Plate 51. The main entrance to the Acropolis of Alatri, with 4-meter- (13 foot) long monolithic lintel and third manner polygonal stonework. © *Marco M. Vigato.*

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© *Marco M. Vigato.*

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Plate 64. The cruciform chamber of Guirún near Mitla, Oaxaca, built of enormous andesitic stone blocks. © *Marco M. Vigato.*

Plate 65. Another view of the cruciform chamber of Guirún, showing intricate ornamentation on the inside of the stones. © *Marco M. Vigato.*

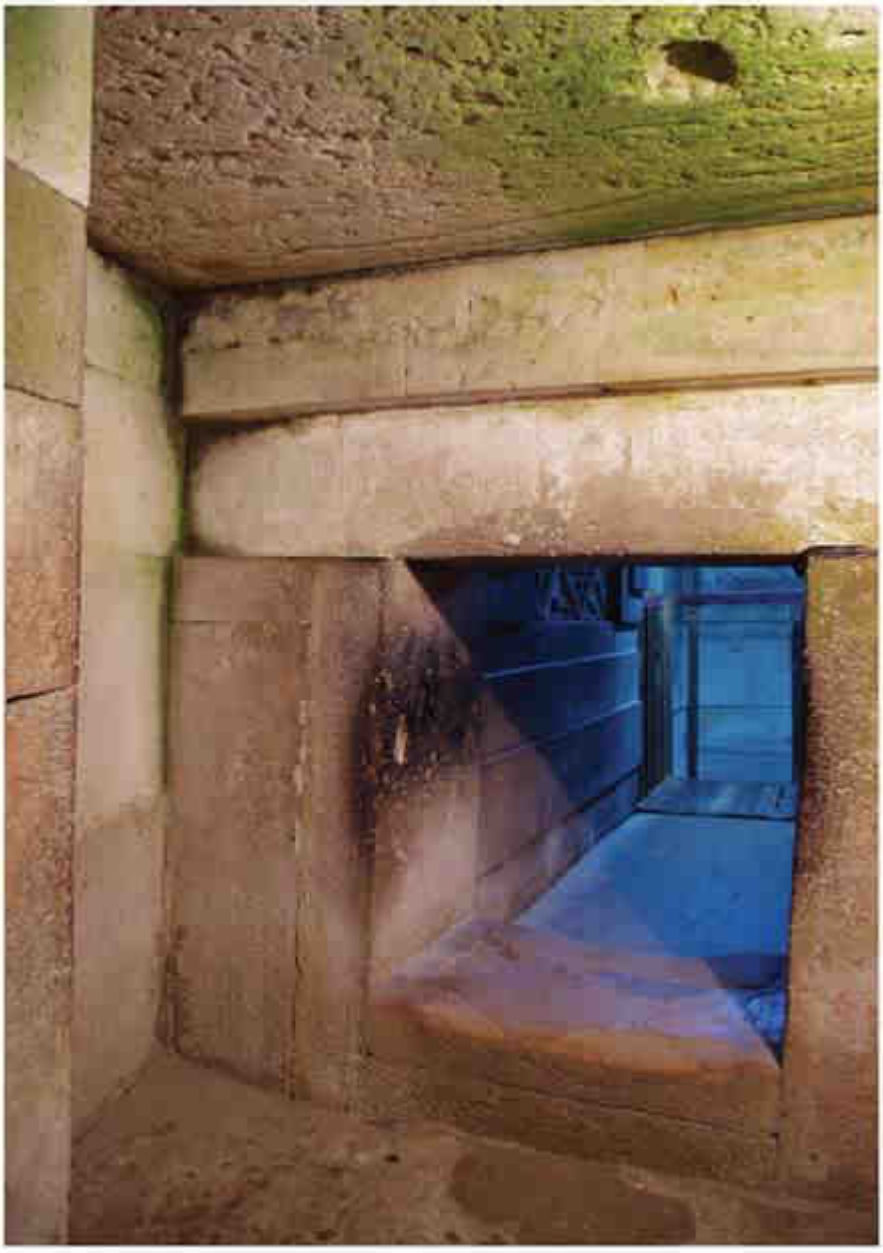

Plate 66. The megalithic interior of a subterranean chamber in one of the palaces at Mitla, Oaxaca. © *Marco M. Vigato.*

Plate 67. Precision megalithic stonework in Mitla, Oaxaca. © *Marco M. Vigato.*

Plate 68. A view of the Temple of the Cross complex in Palenque. © *Marco M. Vigato.*

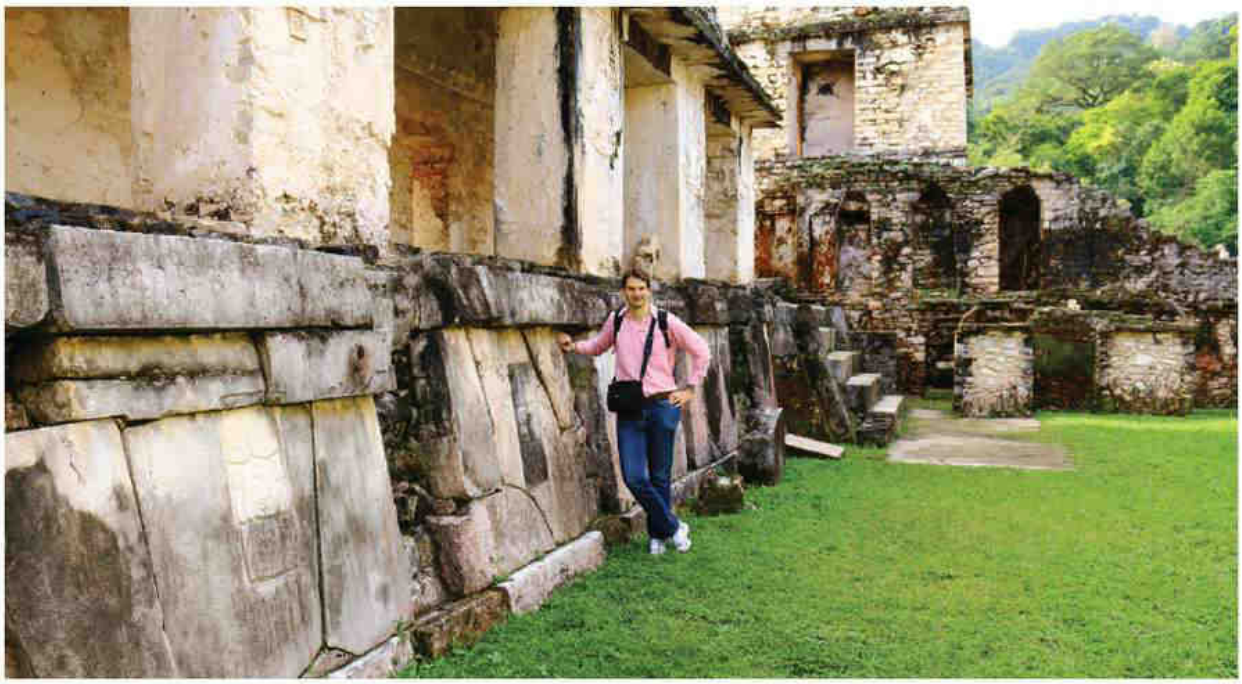

Plate 69. The author, standing next to a megalithic foundation

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Plate 70. The “Atlantean” statues of Tula, Hidalgo, carved in basalt. © *Marco M. Vigato.*

Plate 71. The eroded mass of a once gigantic mudbrick pyramid on the coast of Peru, near Tucume. © *Marco M. Vigato.*

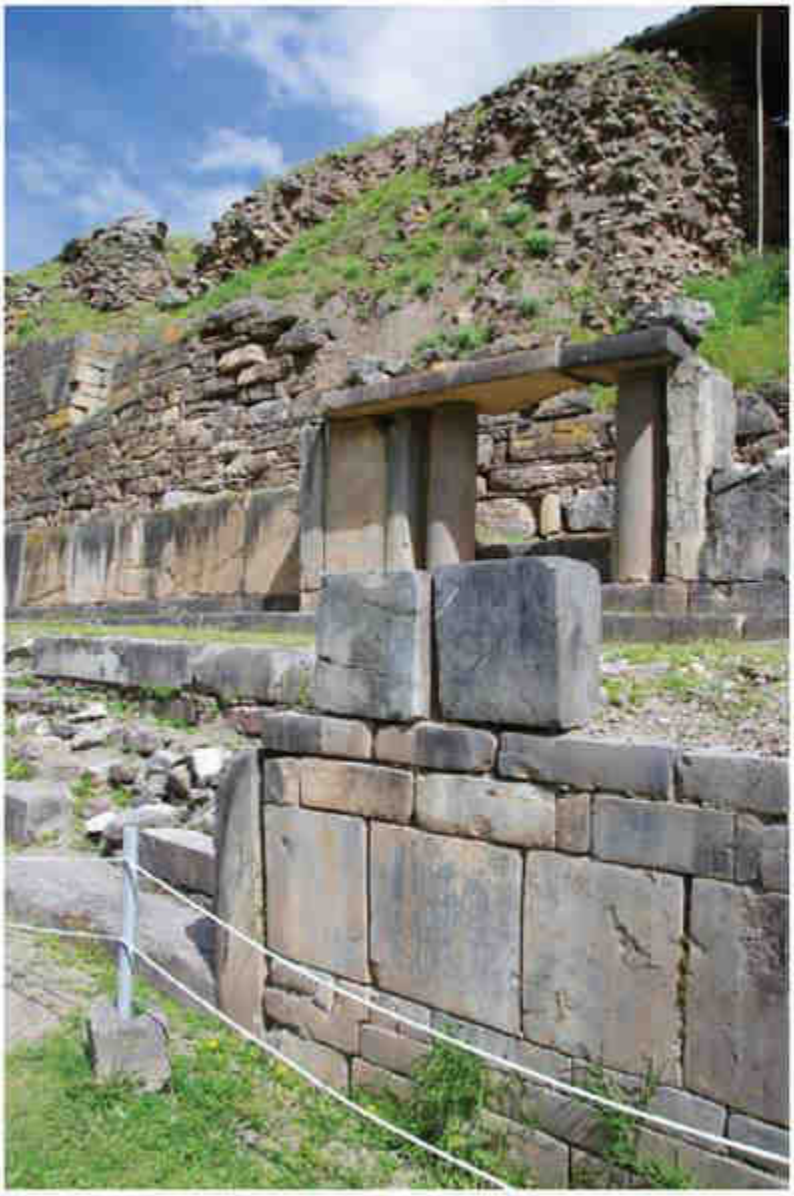


Plate 72. The main temple of Chavin de Huantar. © *Marco M. Vigato.*

Plate 73. The Temple of Philae on Lake Nasser, where the last known hieroglyphic inscription was recorded in 394 AD. © *Marco M. Vigato.*

Plate 74. The astronomical tower of Harran, in southeast Turkey, still dominating the vast field of ruins. © *Marco M. Vigato.*

Plate 75. Ruins of Harran's Grand Mosque in presentday Turkey with the astronomical tower in background. The mosque was built with stones taken from the temple of Sin. © *Marco M. Vigato.*

Plate 76. An octagonal tower in the fortress of Harran, Turkey, possibly part of an ancient Sabian temple of the Moon god Sin.
© *Marco M. Vigato.*

Plate 77. The Cathedral of Notre Dame on Paris's Ile de la Cité. © *Marco M. Vigato.*

Plate 78. Part of the unfinished temple on the summit of the Ta Keo Mountain Temple in Angkor, Cambodia, built of enormous megalithic stone blocks. © *Marco M. Vigato.*

Plate 79. The Bayon Temple in Angkor, mystical heart of the Khmer Empire. © *Marco M. Vigato.*

Plate 80. A view of the Main Plaza of Tikal, Guatemala,

dominated by the Temple of the Great Jaguar (Temple I) in the foreground. © *Marco M. Vigat*

PART IV

ATLANTIS RISES AGAIN

9

THE NEW ATLANTIS

Up to this point, our main sources for reconstructing Atlantean history and prehistory have been a few scattered mythical traditions and the equally disjointed fragments of esoteric history preserved in the records of the various mystery schools that have kept alive the Atlantean tradition through the centuries. With the beginning of the neo-Atlantean period, a wealth of physical and archaeological evidence becomes available for the first time to complement and corroborate these accounts.

The neo-Atlantean period represents the rebirth of a tradition whose very appearance would be impossible to explain without assuming that it was preceded by a long civilized epoch that was only interrupted by the Younger Dryas cataclysm. An immense surge of construction and activity, unparalleled in human history, marked the beginning of the neoAtlantean period. Yet this surge was short-lived: within a few centuries, the great edifice of the neo-Atlantean civilization lay in ruins, and the world was plunged again into a dark age. Whether this was the result of some inevitable cosmic law, of climatic and environmental factors, or of a second cometary impact is a matter that we will try to address in this and the following chapters.

Between 9600 BCE and 3500 BCE, global sea levels rose by as much as 120 meters (390 feet), putting an end to a millennium of relative stability. A

civilization was gone forever, yet its legacy lived on in the countless mythical and historical traditions that speak of a lost golden age in which an earlier humanity decided to rise to heaven and was therefore punished by the very gods whom it had attempted to overthrow. It also lived on in the many monuments that it left behind on nearly every continent and in the gifts of art, culture, and science that it bequeathed to the later civilizations of the historical period.

As our own civilization is now following in those same footsteps, the lessons of the rise and fall of the neo-Atlantean civilization take on an entirely new relevance and perspective. A new tower of Babel is rising from the ashes and on the ruins of the former. Whether it will take humanity into the light of a new golden age or plunge us even further into the depths of the Kali Yuga will largely depend on our own willingness to learn and correct the errors of the past.

THE DAWN OF CIVILIZATION—A LEGACY

For decades following the Younger Dryas cataclysm, conditions similar to a nuclear winter must have prevailed on large parts of the planet, with only a fraction of the sun's heat and radiation reaching the surface. Outside of the underground cities and shelters, survival would have been a matter of chance. Although many had doubtless seen the great antediluvian buildings, arks, utensils, metallic artifacts, weapons, and other technological implements of the prior civilization, they themselves lacked the knowledge to replicate them. Even when they still possessed the knowledge, they lacked the resources. An entire industrial civilization was gone, with all its mining and production facilities. For a while, a vast cross section of artifacts and other useful objects still lay strewn over the postdiluvian landscape. As those, too, wore out and became unusable, however, survivors started to reproduce them with whatever material was available, either wood or stone: the Stone Age had begun. Rather than being a development from earlier Paleolithic techniques, which were the domains of huntergatherers that in many parts of the world coexisted with the coastal outposts of Atlantean civilization, the Stone Age Neolithic techniques, which seemingly appeared out of nowhere, were the result of the admixture of Paleolithic stone technology with Atlantean metallurgical techniques— an attempt to reproduce in stone the

metallic tools and implements of a bygone age.

"After the great destruction," wrote Plato in the third book of *The Laws*, "the means of travelling either by land or sea had been almost entirely lost with the loss of the arts, and there was great difficulty in getting at one another; for iron and brass and all metals were jumbled together and had disappeared in the chaos . . . and there would be no more of them until the art of metallurgy had been again revived."[1]

Survivors were thus forced to "begin again like children . . . knowing nothing of what happened in ancient times."[2]

Certainly, destruction would have been much more severe along the coasts, while the more primitive populations of the interior would have been largely spared. Even so, there is evidence that at least some of the great achievements of antediluvian science and technology were preserved through the cataclysm, helping create a brief but significant neo-Atlantean renaissance between 10,961 and 9600 BCE. Although this brief renaissance did not last, its most durable legacy lived on in what has been aptly called the Neolithic revolution.

THE DAWN OF AGRICULTURE

About twelve thousand years ago, a step change occurred in the way of life of Paleolithic peoples around the world. For reasons not quite yet understood, a lifestyle of nomadic hunting and gathering was abandoned in favor of one of agriculture and settlement. A pattern of densely populated settlements emerged over large areas of the Near East and the Fertile Crescent, accompanied by the domestication of animals and plants and the introduction of pottery and polished stone tools. What is even more puzzling is that this Neolithic or agricultural revolution occurred nearly simultaneously around the world, spreading from some very defined centers that included the Fertile Crescent (10,000 BCE); Sundaland with the Yangtze and Yellow River basins (9,000 BCE); central Mexico (9,000 BCE); western Africa, the Ethiopian highlands, and Egypt (8000 BCE); the New Guinea highlands (7000 BCE); and eastern North America (7000 BCE). It is certainly significant to observe that almost all these centers happened to be located away from the coasts, in areas that would have been ideal shelters from a

global flood.

Equally puzzling is the sudden emergence of so many domesticated varieties of plants and grains, many of which appeared simultaneously on both sides of the Atlantic around 10,000 BCE. Squashes, gourds, pumpkins, melons, cucumbers, and yams were all apparently domesticated at the same time from some unknown wild varieties in West Africa, India, Mexico, and Europe.[3]

A great mystery surrounds the origin of many of our modern grains. It is a well-known fact that what we know today as bread wheat is the result of crossbreeding emmer wheat with the wild grass *Aegilops tauschii*. What is perhaps less known is that emmer wheat is itself the result of crossbreeding two wild plant varieties: einkorn wheat (*Triticum monococcum*) and goat grass (*Aegilops speltoides*). Unlike most other hybrid plants that share half the genetic structure of each parent and are naturally sterile, however, emmer wheat possesses the exceedingly rare characteristic of containing the full genetic structure of both parents.

It was only around ten thousand years ago that a new genetic miracle occurred, which resulted in what is known today as bread wheat. Emmer wheat had to be crossed with an unrelated form of wild goat grass (*Aegilops tauschii*) to produce a new grain containing both sets of chromosomes. Since the emergence of bread wheat about ten thousand years ago, no other examples are known of the fertile crossing of two wheat species.

Maize is another case of a crop that does not grow naturally on the planet. For the wild grassy plant teosinte to produce maize, a genetic mutation was required to form the now familiar cob. So unlikely is such a mutation to have occurred spontaneously, given the plant's inability to reproduce without people detaching the seeds from the cob and planting them in the ground, that modern corn may be in fact considered a genetically engineered species.[4]

In "The Origins of Agriculture," researcher Steve Gagné further observes that there can be no certainty as to whether a certain wild variety of a crop does actually represent a progenitor rather than a descendant of the domesticated kind. Supposedly wild varieties could be thus the remains of cultivars that have morphologically reverted to their present form after running wild for thousands of years. In support of his theory, Gagné cites the discovery of pieces of domesticated wheat and barley dating back to over twenty-three thousand years ago at a site called Ohalo II in Israel. His

conclusion is that many wild progenitors could be in fact “cultivars from a civilization or civilizations predating the orthodox theory for agricultural origin” that later ran wild.[5]

Sophisticated detoxification techniques also had to be developed in conjunction with crossbreeding and hybridization in order for the potato and other tubers growing at high altitudes to become edible. The high levels of toxic glycoalkaloids present in the wild untreated varieties of these crops required a complicated process of freezing, leaching, and sun drying in order to remove the majority of the toxic compounds and the excess levels of nitrates naturally present in the tubers.[6] According to renowned scientist and anthropologist David L. Browman, “There is yet no satisfactory explanation for the development of these detoxification processes.”[7]

The same also applies to a number of medicinal plants. For thousands of years, the shamans of the Amazon have known the hallucinogenic properties of ayahuasca and the poisonous curare. In the case of ayahuasca, however, simple ingestion of the plant is not enough, for the delicate structure of the DMT molecule is thoroughly destroyed and rendered inactive by the digestive enzymes naturally present in the human stomach. An inhibitor thus becomes necessary to deactivate these enzymes, which would otherwise block the hallucinogenic effect. “So here are people without electron microscopes,” observes anthropologist Jeremy Narby, “who choose, among some 80,000 Amazonian plant species, the leaves of a bush containing a hallucinogenic brain hormone, which they combine with a vine containing substances that inactivate an enzyme of the digestive tract which would otherwise block the hallucinogenic effect. And they do this to modify their consciousness. It’s as if they knew about the molecular properties of plants and the art of combining them.”[8]

It is extremely unlikely that the secrets of these plants could have been revealed by chance experimentation alone. In the case of the poisonous curare, continues Narby, “There are forty types of curare in the Amazon, made from seventy plant species. . . . To produce it, it is necessary to combine several plants and boil them for seventy-two hours, while avoiding the fragrant but mortal vapor emitted by the broth. The final product is a paste that is inactive unless injected under the skin [on the tip of an arrow or spear, for example]. If swallowed, it has no effect. . . . It is difficult to see how anybody could have stumbled on this recipe by chance

experimentation."[9]

In every area of the world where plants and animals were first domesticated, we find myths and legends describing the origin of agriculture as a gift of the gods. It is to these "gods" that we owe the creation of a vital and lasting food supply that is still at the base of our modern nutrition.

THE ARTS OF CIVILIZATION

The Neolithic revolution was no slow evolutionary process. It happened suddenly, within the span of just a few generations, on nearly every continent. According to the Book of Enoch, it was the Watchers who taught primitive men the secrets of plants and agriculture and the domestication of animals, as well as the art of making garments and tools and the knowledge of metals, medicine, and astronomy. These were the same as the Babylonian Oannes and Apkallus, a race of antediluvian sages who taught men "the skills necessary for writing and for doing mathematics and all sorts of knowledge: how to build cities, found temples and make laws . . . how to determine borders and divide land, also how to plant seeds and then to harvest their fruits and vegetables. In short, . . . all those things conductive to a settled and civilized life."[10]

This was so much so, wrote Berossus, that "since that time, nothing further has been discovered."[11]

In Egypt, the god Thoth was considered the inventor of writing, mathematics, medicine, and astronomy. Among the Romans, it was Ceres, known as Demeter to the Greeks, who taught mortals agriculture, whereas the god Dionysus was hailed as the inventor of wine. Saturn, who was Kronos to the Greeks, was similarly revered as the god of crops and agriculture: the ruler of a mythical island in the West, he was banished to Central Italy by his son Zeus, where he taught the indigenous people the art of sowing and planting and gave them laws and a peaceful government. In the Iranian tradition, a similar role was taken by Yima (or Yamshed). It was he who taught the people of the Golden Age the use of the plow for agriculture and the making of clothes, garments, and weapons, as well as the use of medicinal herbs and plants to cure all kinds of diseases. He was also the first to bake bricks to build houses and cities and to work with metals.

On the opposite side of the Atlantic, it was the god Quetzalcoatl who taught the primitive race of the Toltecs all their arts and sciences. “In truth,” wrote Sahagún, “He [Quetzalcoatl] invented all the wonderful, precious, marvelous things which they made.”[12] Under his benevolent rule, the Toltecs became great artisans and craftsmen. They learned to cultivate maize, squash, and amaranth, and they grew cotton that was naturally colored in red, blue, and yellow. They became also the inventors of the science of astronomy and the calendar. So great was their wisdom that “they understood the stars that are in the heavens, gave them names and understood their influence.” They also recognized “the movements of the heavens. Their orbits . . . they learned from the stars.”[13]

Quetzalcoatl was known by many different names. The Maya of Yucatan and Guatemala knew him as Kukulkan, Gucumatz, or Votan. He was already a very ancient god in 1200 BCE, when his image was carved on the famous Olmec Monument 19 of La Venta (see Figure 3.2). Farther south, we find in Colombia the tradition of the great culture hero Zuhe or Bochica, who taught the Muisca the art of weaving and growing cotton, visited many lands, opened wonderful highways through the mountains, and gave the first sets of laws to the people.

In Peru, the Incas assigned to the god Viracocha the attributes of a culture hero and civilizer. He was described as a “white man of large stature and authoritative demeanor. . . . This man had such great power that he changed the hills into valleys and from the valleys made great hills, causing streams to flow from the living stone.”[14] His birthplace was the ancient city of Tiwanaku, near the shores of Lake Titicaca. “He was a scientist, an architect of surpassing skills, a sculptor and an engineer,” writes Graham Hancock. “He caused terraces and fields to be formed on the steep sides of ravines, and sustaining walls to rise up and support them. He also made irrigating channels to flow. . . . and he went in various directions, arranging many things.”[15]

Always, before the coming of these civilizers, men had lived “like savages . . . with no houses or other dwellings than caves,” conducting a miserable existence of sustenance from whatever the land would provide them.[16] What these myths seem to describe is the transition from a hunter-gatherer lifestyle to a settled, agricultural society. Their origin must there-fore be sought near the end of the Younger Dryas, at the time of the Neolithic

revolution.

POST-FLOOD RECONSTRUCTION

In light of the many mythical traditions presented in the previous chapters, it only seems reasonable to assume that the massive surge of activity and construction that characterized the immediate post-Flood period was the direct consequence of the arrival of groups of Atlantean survivors who brought with them the superior civilization and technology of their motherland.

In the aftermath of the global cataclysm, vast areas of the planet were left entirely depopulated. The scarcity of survivors and the lack of communication further widened the cultural and technological divide between the bulk of humanity and the highly civilized but comparatively small neo-Atlantean elite. If we assume that the first centers of postdiluvian civilization were built along the coasts, where they would later become submerged by rising sea levels at the end of the Younger Dryas, it also becomes easier to explain the sudden emergence of complex agricultural settlements such as Jericho, Çatal Höyük, and Göbekli Tepe during the early Neolithic period. Far from being the point of origin of an agricultural revolution, these centers were the cultural backwater of a far more advanced coastal civilization.

Already in 7400 BCE, the people of Çatal Höyük, in southeastern Anatolia, practiced one of the earliest forms of scientific agriculture. They also mastered sophisticated stone and metalworking techniques that are a puzzle for archaeologists. James Mellaart, the archaeologist in charge of excavations at the site for nearly two decades, was often confronted with difficult questions raised by the artifacts uncovered. For instance, how could the ancient people of Çatal Höyük “polish a mirror of obsidian, a hard volcanic glass, without scratching it, and how did they drill holes through stone beads . . . holes so small that no fine modern steel needle can penetrate. When and where did they learn to smelt copper and lead, metals attested at Çatal Höyük since level IX, c. 6400 BC?”[17]

In Mellaart’s opinion, these achievements could only have marked the “climax” of an “immensely long ancestry.”[18]

While many will struggle with this idea of a dual and almost parallel evolution of civilization on the coasts and in the interior of continents, we should be reminded that this situation was still the norm in vast areas of our planet until the advent of global communications in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, with many “uncontacted” tribes still living to this day an existence of pure Neolithic sustenance in parts of the Amazon, New Guinea, and the extreme north of Russia.

These people would have doubtless recorded in their myths and traditions the arrival of strange “missionaries” from some foreign land who brought with them the gifts of a superior and far more advanced civilization.

FAIR GODS FROM AFAR

Many traditions speak of the advent of mysterious “sages” who helped to restart civilization in the aftermath of a global cataclysm. These sages were said to possess not only a level of culture and technology far in advance of that of “primitive” humanity but also physical characteristics that set them apart from the bulk of the peoples that they came in contact with.

All over the newly conquered lands of Mexico and Peru, Spanish missionaries were surprised to find among the indigenous populations traditions of a foreign, fair-skinned race that came in ancient times to the American continent. In the words of the Mexican eighteenth-century historian Francisco Clavijero, who based his account on sources that are now lost, the great culture hero Quetzalcoatl was “white in complexion . . . tall and corpulent, broad in forehead, with large eyes, long black hair, thick beard; a man of austere and exemplary life, clothed in long garments, gentle and prudent. . . . He was expert in the art of melting metals and polishing precious stones, which he taught the Tultecans.”[19]

Another Spanish historian, Father Juan de Torquemada (1562–1624), also described Quetzalcoatl and his companions as men who were “great in stature . . . of fair and ruddy complexion, with long beards . . . excellent gold and silver-smiths.”[20]

They landed at Pánuco, on the coast of the Gulf of Mexico, and marched inland. When they finally settled, they built “the splendid city of Tullan [Teotihuacan], with fine and beautiful houses, temples and palaces, all of the

greatest magnificence."[21]

In South America, Viracocha was portrayed as a man "of large stature and authoritative demeanor," with a long flowing beard, whereas in Colombia, the hero Zuhe or Bochica was similarly described as white and bearded, "unlike a man of any race known to them."[22] Wherever they went across the Inca lands of South America, the Spanish conquistadors were greeted as Viracochas on account of their white skin and long beards. Many Inca kings also bore the same title, a reminder of their divine origins.

Thus, according to Pedro Pizarro, brother of the conquistador Francisco Pizarro, "The ruling class of the Kingdom of Peru was fair skinned, with fair hair about the color of ripe wheat. . . . Most of the great lords and ladies looked white like Spaniards."[23] He also recalled once meeting a woman and child in the streets of Cuzco "both so fair skinned that they were hardly distinguishable from fair, white people."[24] He was told by his guides that those were the "children and descendants of the Gods."[25]

According to the great anthropologist and explorer Thor Heyerdahl, members of this mysterious fair-skinned race were the original megalithic builders of Tiwanaku and of the many cyclopean monuments of Peru and Bolivia. "These vanished architects," he wrote, "had originally come from the North long ago in the morning of time, and had taught the Incas' primitive forefathers architecture and agriculture, as well as manners and customs. . . . They were unlike other Indians in having white skin and long beards; they were also taller than the Incas."[26]

By the time the Incas took control of the country, this race had already "vanished forever from the coast of South America and fled across the Pacific."[27]

Heyerdahl found evidence of the presence of a Caucasoid element in ancient South America in the hundreds of red-haired mummies buried in the desert sands of Paracas, along the Pacific coast of Peru, and in the much earlier Chinchorro culture of Chile, dating back to 7000 BCE.

The pre-Columbian representations of the heroes Quetzalcoatl and Viracocha share many traits in common with analogous biblical descriptions of the antediluvian Watchers. For instance, the second-century BCE Visions of Amram gives the following description of a Watcher: "terrifying in appearance, like a serpent, his cloak many-colored yet very dark . . . his

visage like a viper." And another passage states, "There appeared to me two men . . . very tall, such as I have never seen on earth. And their faces shone like the sun, and their eyes were like burning lamps. . . . Their dress had the appearance of feathers."[28]

It can hardly be a coincidence that both the Mesoamerican Quetzalcoatl and the Babylonian Oannes would be similarly portrayed as wearing garments having the appearance of scales or feathers, the same garments that adorn the statues of the ancient dead city of Tiwanaku.

The description that the Book of Enoch gives of the miraculous birth of Noah provides more useful elements for the reconstruction of the appearance of a Watcher. His body, we read, "was white as snow and red as a rose; the hair of his head as white as wool and beautiful; and as for his eyes, when he opened them the whole house glowed like the Sun."[29]

This would cause Lamech to complain to his own father, Methuselah, "I have begotten a strange son. He is not like an ordinary human being, but he looks like the children of the angels of heaven to me."[30]

An almost identical story is told in the Persian national epic known as the *Shāh-Nāmeh.* Here it is the hero Sām who begets an extraordinary child: his body being as "clear as silver," his hair "white as an old man's" and "like snow," his face "like paradise" and "as beautiful as the Sun," his form "as straight as a cypress tree," and his cheeks "ruddy and beautiful . . . like the rose of spring." Like Lamech, Sām is persuaded that the child is not his own, for he says, "No human being of this earth could give to such a monster birth; he must be of the Demon race, though human still in form and face."[31]

Elsewhere, the boy is called "a child of Ahriman," a "Demon," and the "son of some Daeva," so as to reinforce his supposed celestial or "angelic" origin.[32]

It is quite possible that, occasionally, individuals representing a genetic throwback to some ancestral line would be born with characteristics that, to use the words of Andrew Collins, "bore too close a resemblance to the original 'shining' race" and so were "cast out as direct progeny of the fallen Asuras."[33] Their physical characteristics almost inevitably included great height and a "divine radiance." The persecution of albino people that continues to this day in many parts of Africa may have similar roots in a perceived supernatural origin of this condition.

RISE OF THE NEPHILIM

According to the book of Genesis, “The Nephilim were on the earth in those days—and also afterward—when the sons of God went in to the daughters of men, who bore children to them. These were the heroes that were of old, warriors of renown.”[34]

Who were these Nephilim, and what role did they play in the resurrection of the neo-Atlantean civilization in the postdiluvian period? In chapter 4, we discussed the possibility that modern man is essentially a genetically engineered hybrid, 50 percent Atlantean and 50 percent hominin. The Nephilim were therefore the *hybrid of a hybrid,* the result of the interbreeding of pure Atlanteans with modern humans, then of the CroMagnon race. In purely genetic terms, the Nephilim were thus 75 percent Atlantean and 25 percent hominin. This would have greatly increased the probability of genetic throwbacks to the original Atlantean line, which may in turn explain such episodes as the miraculous birth of Noah and of other legendary Iranian heroes who were said to possess unusual “angelic” or “divine” characteristics. The equally untranslatable Emim, Anakim, and Rephaim of Genesis may similarly refer to different Nephilim groups or tribes.

Different races and even human species may have therefore coexisted in the postdiluvian period as part of a caste system based on the alleged purity of their Atlantean heritage. Only with the passing of many generations did the Atlantean element become sufficiently diluted as to leave only faint traces in the genetic makeup of modern human populations.

Most ancient traditions agree in attributing to these Atlantean-human hybrids certain physical characteristics that would have made them obviously stand out among the rest of the population. These included exceptional or uncommon height, fair skin, and light hair and eye colors.

Another trait of these hybrids not explicitly mentioned in the ancient sources but strongly hinted at by the practice of cranial deformation among many worldwide cultures may have been a peculiarly elongated shape of the skull. The very practice of cranial deformation may have been motivated by the desire to look like the gods, to take on some of their most distinctive physical traits and characteristics.

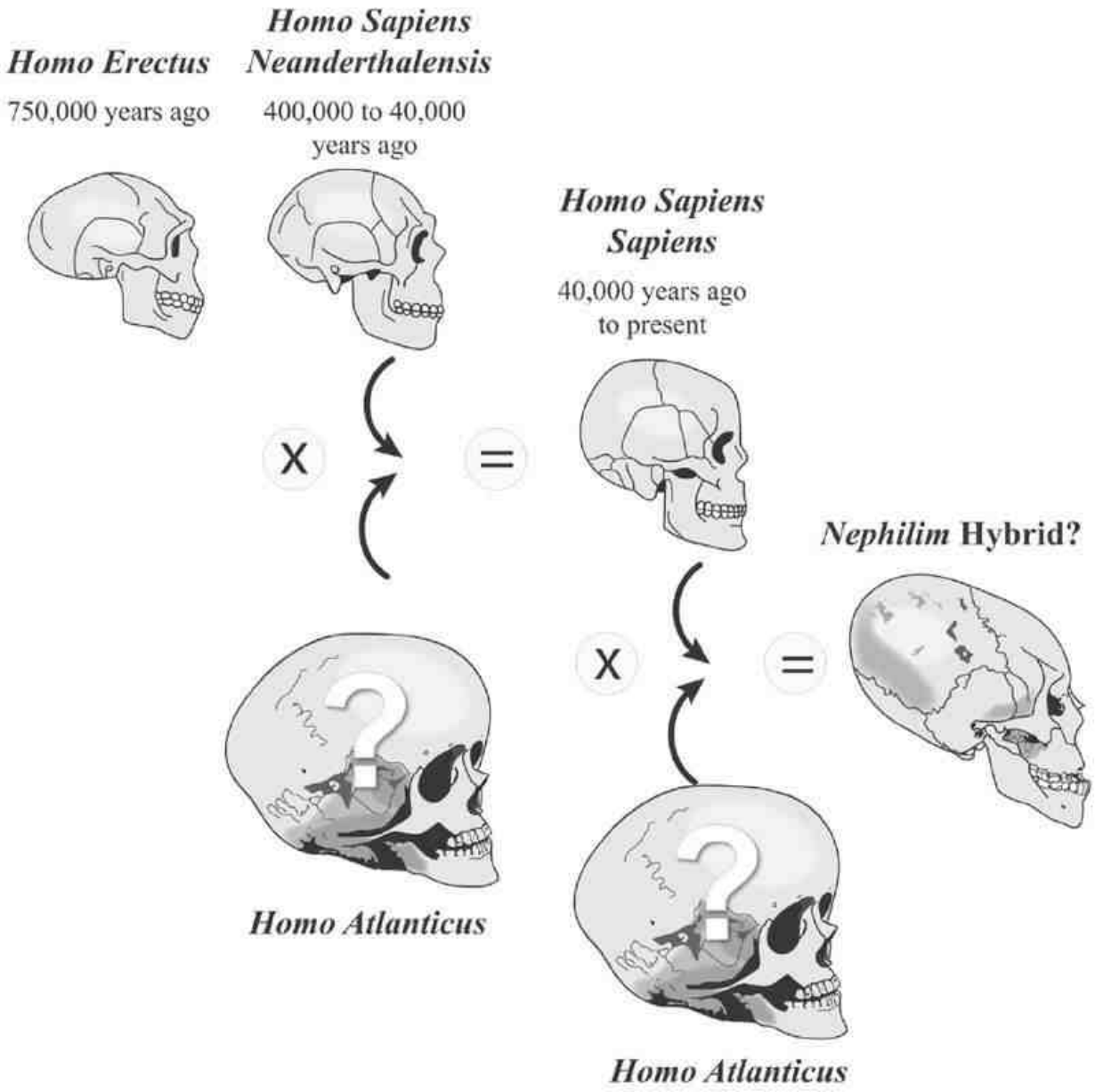


Figure 9.1. Human hybridization in the Atlantean and neo-Atlantean periods as indicated by the changing shapes of the human skull, including that of a possible Nephilim hybrid, which might have had a noticeably elongated skull.

Strange-Looking Skulls

When discussing examples of anomalously elongated skulls, the obvious question arises as to whether we are in the presence of an artificial deformation or of an inherited genetic trait.

In 1913, a peculiar-looking skull was discovered near Boskop, South Africa. The skull belonged to an apparently anatomically modern human who lived during the late Pleistocene epoch, some thirteen thousand to eleven thousand years ago. What was unusual about this skull is that it possessed the extraordinary cranial capacity of 1,980 cubic centimeters (120 cubic inches), being thus nearly 25 percent larger than that of a modern human. In the following years, more skulls were found in the same area, also showing exceptional cranial capacities of 2,000 cubic centimeters (122 cubic inches) or more.

In an article published in 1925 in the prestigious scientific journal *Nature*, the Scottish anthropologist Robert Broom would say that, on the basis of these measurements alone, "the distance from Boskop to humans is greater than the distance between humans and their Homo Erectus predecessors."[35]

Broom even assigned Boskop Man to a new species, which he called *Homo capensis.* Boskop Man possessed not only a larger brain than modern humans—"at the upper range of what has ever been recorded in human history," to use the words of researchers Gary Lynch and Richard Granger—but also a much larger perifrontal cortex, an area of the brain typically linked to our highest cognitive functions.[36]

The most recent discovery of a new prehistoric human species occurred in 2010 at the Denisova Cave in the Altai Mountains of Siberia. The Denisovans, as the new species became known, turned out to be part of an entirely separate branch of the human family, sharing approximately 17 percent of their genome with Neanderthals, with additional contributions from some other yet unidentified human lineage.[37] The few bone fragments found in the Denisova cave included a molar tooth so large that at first it was thought it belonged to a cave bear. This has led researchers to speculate that Denisovans may have possessed exceptionally robust and tall bodies.

In the same fifty-thousand-year-old layer, archaeologists also found a chlorite bracelet of remarkable sophistication. "What is incredible," commented Mikhail Shunkov of the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography of Novosibirsk, is that "the craftsman who made the adornment, seems to have used something similar to a modern drill," characterized by a very high rotational speed and minimal fluctuations in diameter.[38]

The closest living relatives to the extinct Denisovans seem to be the

modern Melanesian Islanders, who share an estimated 1 percent to 5 percent of their DNA with Denisovans.[39] Melanesians are unique among people of non-European descent in manifesting the rare combination of dark skin with blond hair and blue eyes, which seemingly originated from a different genetic mutation from the one responsible for blond hair among Europeans.[40]

Moving back to historical times, the practice of cranial deformation seems to have been widespread in the ancient world, with the earliest known examples dating to the ninth millennium BCE from the Shanidar Cave in Iraqi Kurdistan. This practice, by binding a child's head either in cloth or between pieces of wood, usually resulted in a peculiarly elongated or conical shape of the skull. The widespread use of cranial deformation among many primitive cultures may have arisen from the desire to emulate the physical characteristics of certain members of society considered to be of higher status, if not of divine origin, among whom an elongated shape of the skull was a natural condition.

One of the largest collections of elongated skulls anywhere in the world is found among the Paracas culture of ancient Peru, which thrived between 750 BCE and 100 CE. Yet interestingly, some of the more extreme characteristics of these skulls cannot be easily attributed to artificial cranial deformation. These include a larger average cranial capacity than the one attested for modern humans, often in the 2,000 to 3,000 cubic centimeters range (122 to 183 cubic inches), the absence of a sagittal suture (the joint at the top of the head between the two parietal bones of the skull), and an anomalous position of the foramen magnum, where the spinal cord enters the skull. To further confirm the different racial origins of the Paracas people, many of the mummies have red hair, a condition not apparently resulting from sun-bleaching or dyeing. Genetic testing conducted on some of the mummies in 2014 revealed an anomalous high frequency of European and Middle Eastern genetic markers not commonly found in native American Indian populations.[41]

Peculiarly elongated skulls have also been found in Bolivia, at Tiwanaku, and among the Maya peoples of Mexico and Guatemala. In the Old World, artificial cranial deformation was practiced by certain Germanic tribes, as well as by the Huns and the Alans of late antiquity (300–600 CE).

Artificial cranial deformation was never practiced in ancient Egypt, yet skeletal remains of the Amarna period (1351–1334 BCE) display unusually

elongated skulls, which are also a common feature in the royal statuary of that time.

Cro-Magnon man has also been described as dolichocephalic, that is, having a markedly elongated shape of the skull, with several prehistoric skulls found on the Mediterranean island of Malta also displaying similar characteristics.

These elongated skulls may or may not have belonged to the historical descendants of the antediluvian Nephilim, but they confirm nevertheless the importance attributed by ancient cultures to certain physical characteristics considered to be of divine origin.

It is in this context that practices like that of consanguineous marriage among members of the same royal family may have developed in the neo-Atlantean and post-Atlantean periods from the perceived necessity of preserving the genetic purity of the original Atlantean bloodlines.

RESURRECTING THE PRIMEVAL WORLD OF THE GODS

Before we embark on a journey of discovery that will take us from Egypt to South America on the trail of the last Atlanteans, it is worth restating some of the key facts presented in the previous chapters.

While discussing the mysterious origins of man, we introduced *Homo Atlanticus* as the true missing link in the chain of human evolution. This superior ancestor originated on the continent of Atlantis over half a million years ago and reached a very high level of civilization hundreds of thousands of years before the first modern humans appeared in Africa and Europe. We further showed that modern man may be, in fact, a genetically engineered hybrid: half *Homo Atlanticus* and half hominin.

Over the course of the second Atlantean period, between 35,335 BCE and 10,961 BCE, a small group of these hominin-Atlantean hybrids became the ancestors of the fifth root race, the Aryans. Under the guidance of the initiates of the White Island, the fifth root race prospered, giving rise to a mighty empire of its own. In chapter 7, we then discussed the consequences of the great terrestrial cataclysm of 10,961 BCE, when a large cometary body

impacted the Laurentide Ice Sheet of northern Canada with a force equivalent to several times the combined power of all the world's nuclear weapons. The airbursts from the impacts caused the instant melting of the polar ice caps and sent out tidal waves that ravaged the Earth's continents, obliterating nearly every trace of civilization. In chapter 8, we told the stories of the survivors from the great cataclysm and how the records of the antediluvian civilization were preserved for the benefit of a future humanity.

We then discussed the impact that the Atlantean survivors had on the beginning of agriculture and civilization in places as far apart as Egypt, Mesopotamia, and South America. We also presented evidence of further hybridization in the neo-Atlantean period, when the Atlantean "sons of the gods" went unto the "daughters of man." All of this led us to the conclusion that the neo-Atlantean Empire was in fact an empire of the Nephilim race, as this new human-Atlantean hybrid race became known. For over a thousand years, until its fall around 9600 BCE, the neo-Atlantean Empire stood as a beacon of culture and civilization from which colonists and missionaries set out to different parts of the world in an attempt to restore the primeval world of the gods as it had existed before the Flood.

Even so, many questions remain unanswered: For instance, did postdiluvian civilization spread at once from a single center, or did it have instead multiple centers? And how advanced was this civilization? The following chapters will attempt to provide an answer to all these questions. For this, we will start our journey from a place, Babel, which more than any other incarnates the old Atlantean dream of becoming like gods ourselves.

THE STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN

According to biblical chronologies, the construction of the Tower of Babel began in the fifth year of Peleg's life, 106 years after the Flood. "The world," we read in the book of Genesis, had then "one language and a common speech." As people moved eastward, they found a plain in Shinar and began building a city and a tower whose top may reach unto heaven. They said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves; otherwise we will be scattered over the face of the whole earth."[42]

But the Lord "came down to see the city and the tower the people were building" and he said, "'If as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible to them. Come, let us go down and confuse their language, so they will not understand each other.' So the Lord scattered them over all the earth, and they stopped building the city. This is why it was called Babel—Because there the Lord confused the language of the whole world."[43]

The city and the tower represented humanity's first attempt at restoring civilization in the postdiluvian period. The tower reaching to the heavens became thus a metaphor of the breaking of the human condition, a restoration of fallen humanity to its legitimate place in the heavens. In this respect, the Babylonian Epic of Gilgamesh and the tale of Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratta provide the most likely prototype on which the biblical account was based.

The book of Genesis is curiously silent as to the identity of the builders of the Tower of Babel. However, a wealth of Jewish legends and apocryphal traditions point to Nimrod as the first ruler of the postdiluvian world. Genesis 10:8–9 states that Nimrod "became a mighty warrior on the earth . . . a mighty hunter before the Lord."[44]

The sense of this passage may be better understood by realizing that the expression "mighty warrior" is in fact a poor translation of the Hebrew Gibborim, a term used somehow interchangeably in the Old Testament with the word Nephilim to describe the hybrid progeny of humans and fallen angels. In the Babylonian epic, Gilgamesh, the son of the goddess Ninsun and the mortal king Lugalbanda was similarly said to be "two thirds god, one third human," thus making him a Nephilim in the biblical sense.[45]

In the Babylonian epic, Gilgamesh, having become king of Uruk, journeys to the home of Utnapishtim, the sole survivor of the Great Flood, in order to learn from him the secret of immortality. Although the Epic of Gilgamesh does not mention a tower, like Nimrod, Gilgamesh is punished by the gods for his attempt to become more than human through acquiring the forbidden secret of immortality.

Another king of Uruk is also the protagonist of the story of Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratta. Dating to 2000 BCE, the story describes the construction of a great tower or temple called the E-Ana. To finance the construction of

this temple, Enmerkar prays to the goddess Inanna, asking her to let him exact a tribute from the king of Aratta. Enmerkar also prays to the god Enki to restore the linguistic unity of mankind, so that "the speech of mankind is truly one"—seemingly alluding to an earlier confusion of tongues.[46] In light of this, it does not seem a coincidence that the Bible would call out Uruk among the cities ruled by Nimrod, together with Babylon, Akkad, and Kalneh in the land of Shinar.

Concerning Nimrod's other attribute as a "mighty hunter before the lord," it is quite obvious that Nimrod was no ordinary hunter of game, but of the souls of men, whom he tried to drive away from Yahweh. The expression must therefore signify "in opposition to the Lord," or "in the face of Yahweh." This seems to be the interpretation of this passage given in the first century CE by Josephus, who also provides the following account of Nimrod's reign: "Now it was Nimrod who excited them to such an affront and contempt of God. . . . He also gradually changed the government into tyranny, seeing no other way of turning men from the fear of God, but to bring them into a constant dependence on his power. He also said he would be revenged on God, if he should have a mind to drown the world again; for that he would build a tower too high for the waters to reach. And that he would avenge himself on God for destroying their forefathers."[47]

Other versions, including Pseudo-Philo and the apocryphal Book of Jasher, similarly describe Nimrod as a tyrant. Ultimately, it seems that Nimrod's objective was to establish a potentate like that of the antediluvian Nephilim in an attempt to restore the former Atlantean world order.

We will leave it to the reader to decide if, truly, a "satanic" design lies behind the plan to resurrect Atlantean civilization or if we are all the victims of a great deception aimed at depriving mankind of its rightful place in the universe and of its legitimate right to knowledge.

GLOBAL RECONSTRUCTION

What the previous chapters demonstrate is that a global reconstruction effort was already underway in the centuries immediately following the cometary impacts of 10,961 BCE. This global reconstruction gathered impulse from two main factors. The first was the restoration of a stable agricultural food

supply; the second, the reestablishment of transoceanic communications and trade routes. Certainly no less important and instrumental to this was the recovery of a large body of antediluvian knowledge and technology that had been preserved through the cataclysm.

Contemporary science shows that the agricultural revolution did not start in the fertile plains of Egypt and Mesopotamia, but in the mountainous regions of the Caucasus and the Zagros Mountains, as well as in the highlands of Ethiopia and South America. This apparent paradox has never been satisfactorily explained, particularly if we consider that these alleged cradles of agriculture lacked not only a suitable climate but even many of the supposed wild varieties from which the modern cultivars are believed to have originated. An explanation may be found only if we assume that it was in those regions that the majority of the Flood survivors had taken refuge, as Plato says, "scanty embers of the human race . . . preserved somewhere on the mountain-tops."[48]

As the waters subsided and the lowlands became once again inhabitable and suitable for agriculture, new cities were built in the plains. According to Josephus, it was in the plain of Shinar that the Flood survivors began to grow and multiply "with a numerous youth," until it became necessary for them to "send colonies abroad, for the through peopling of the earth; that they may not raise seditions among themselves."[49] In confirmation of his account, Josephus adds that, according to Hestiaeus,[*25] it was to "Shinar of Babylonia" that "such of the Priests as were saved [from the Flood] took the sacred vessels of Jupiter Enyalius." A similar account was given by Berossus, who stated that after the Flood the sacred records were dug up from the city of Sippar and from there brought to Babylon.

The idea of Mesopotamia being the cradle of postdiluvian civilization rests largely on the interpretation of the name Shinar (רעוש, in Hebrew). Most interpreters agree that the root רעש evokes the concept of "casting out" or "scattering." According to independent researcher Ralph Ellis, however, the names Shinar and Babel may have an Egyptian rather than a Mesopotamian origin. Ellis believes that the four rivers of Paradise mentioned in Genesis must be, in fact, the four branches of the Nile. The mythical land of Shinar must therefore be also searched for in Egypt. As to the name Babel, Ellis sees in it a corruption of the Egyptian word *berber*, used to indicate a pyramid, rather than a tower.[50] If Ellis is right, then the

myth of the tower of Babel may be truly a myth of the building of the Great Pyramid. Mount Shiniyr, later corrupted into Shinar, was, according to Ellis, the original Hebrew name for the Great Pyramid, with its meaning of "snow-covered mountain" being a possible allusion to the pyramid's white stone casing.[51]

A myth nearly identical to that of the building of the Tower of Babel also existed among the Indians of Mexico. According to the Dominican Friar Diego Durán (1537–1588), while the world was still in darkness, giants appeared in the land and began building a pyramid so high that its summit would touch the sky. This angered the gods, who decided to punish the giants by scattering them over the whole Earth. It was the Toltecs, adds the native historian Fernando de Alva Ixtlilxóchitl (1565–1648), who after the Flood erected the great Zacuali (Pyramid) of Cholula to preserve the seed of mankind in case of a second deluge.[52]

Analyzing the similarities between the Babylonian and Mexican legends, the famous nineteenth-century Atlantis scholar Ignatius Donnelly concluded that "both were probably derived from Atlantis, and referred to some gigantic structure of great height built by that people. When the story emigrated to the east and west, it was in one case affixed to the tower of the Chaldeans and in the other to the pyramid of Cholula, precisely as we find the Ark of the Deluge resting upon separate mountain chains all the way from Greece to Armenia."[53]

Perhaps the most interesting element of the Babel narrative is the idea of a single center from which civilization spread once again to the postdiluvian world. This center can hardly have been Atlantis, whose utter destruction is so clearly alluded to in myths and traditions the world over, and it must therefore be searched for elsewhere. The Edfu Building Texts describe the reconstruction of the "Sacred Domains" following the sinking of the primeval island. It was from one of these sacred domains, the "Domain of the Falcon," also called the "Place of the Throne," that the Shebtiw gods sailed to establish the sites of all their future settlements.

The distribution of pyramids and other megalithic structures on virtually every continent testifies to the expansion and extent of the neo-Atlantean civilization of the post-Flood period. "Almost every corner of the world was visited by a group of men with a particular task to accomplish," wrote John Michell in his classic book *The New View over Atlantis.* This "task" involved

the construction of “vast astronomical instruments, circles of erect pillars, pyramids, underground tunnels, cyclopean alignments whose course from horizon to horizon was marked by stones, mounds and earthworks.”[54]

Such a global undertaking would have necessarily required a powerful central authority to direct and coordinate the efforts of millions of people throughout the world.

Everything in our research points to Egypt as the original center from which this massive surge of construction originated—not the familiar Egypt of the great pharaonic temples, pyramids, and sphinxes, however, but a “lost Egypt” that existed thousands of years before the pharaohs.

THE NEW WORLD

With much of the planet still in the grip of the Ice Age, an abundance of fresh water coming from the melting of glaciers in the spring and summer would have fed vast river systems, creating a web of valley oases extending from the mountains to the sea. These seasonal oases would have provided the most ideal locations for any new settlements. Aided by whatever was left of Atlantean science and technology, the survivors turned those river valleys into plentiful gardens. We can imagine similar communities arising simultaneously in the Nile delta and in Mesopotamia, as well as in the Indus valley and along the course of the Amazon and the Mississippi Rivers. Multiple centers of neo-Atlantean civilization probably emerged at this time. These were still relatively independent centers, each relying on their own limited resources.

We do not know for certain how long it took for a neo-Atlantean civilization to rise again from the ashes of the antediluvian world. It is possible, however, that this coincided with the arrival of a second wave of Atlantean refugees into Egypt. With them came not only an obvious impulse toward the reconstruction of all that had been lost in the cataclysm, but also the means for the establishment of a single world government modeled on the antediluvian potentates.

A new capital was established in the region of the Nile delta. This was certainly the same city “in the extreme limits of Egypt . . . towards the setting Sun” where, according to Hermetic legends, “the Gods who exercised their

dominion over the earth would be one day restored." The esoteric tradition knew this city by the name of Adocentyn, whereas in the Edfu Building Texts, it was called the "City of the Falcon" or Hierakonpolis by the Greeks. Its neo-Atlantean rulers carried the title of exarchs (from the Greek ἔξαρχος, meaning "a ruler of a foreign land" or "a colonial governor"), a term used by Manetho to designate the Aulitean (Atlantean) kings of predynastic Egypt. Over time, the sanctified rulers of Hierakonpolis managed to establish a new Atlantean Empire, the first of the postdiluvian world.

Hierakonpolis was certainly the cultural and scientific center of the postdiluvian world, yet little is known of the true extent of its domains. If the great megalithic monuments of Egypt, the Levant, and the Mediterranean share a great similarity in character and architecture, those of India and South America exhibit a distinct individuality of their own. These regional variations suggest that, rather than a single political entity, the neo-Atlantean Empire may have been, in fact, a confederation of largely autonomous if not independent potentates. Similar to the division of the late Roman Empire between Rome and Constantinople, the new Atlantean Empire may have been organized as a single polity governed from two or three separate centers. Hierakonpolis was then the most likely seat of an Eastern exarchy, comprising Egypt, the Levant, Mediterranean Europe, and North Africa. In the West, Tiwanaku headed its own separate exarchy, extending its rule over the entire American continent.

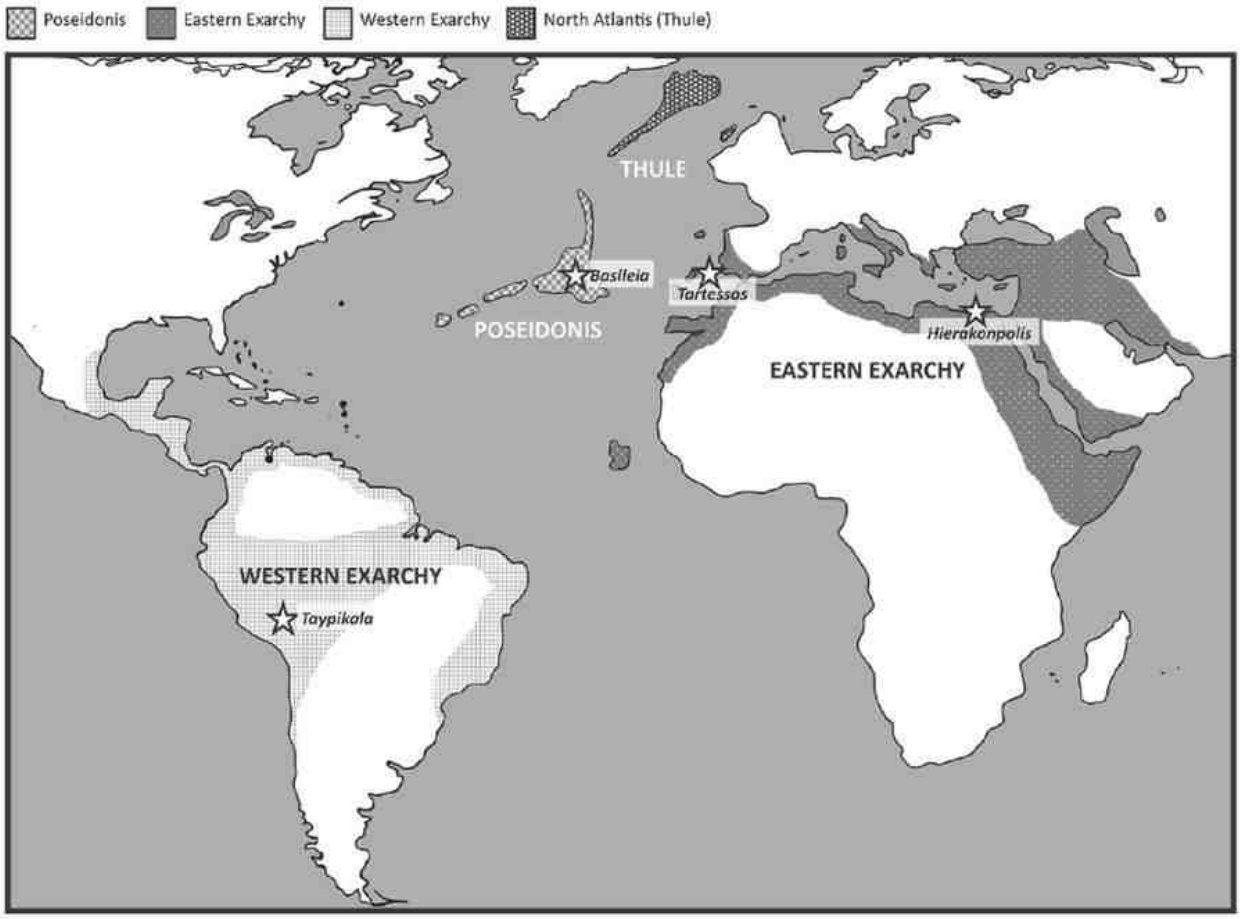


Figure 9.2. Extent of the eastern and western exarchies and site of the island of Poseidonis during the neo-Atlantean period, including indication of the main centers of the neo-Atlantean civilization (ca. 10,961–9600 BCE).

In parallel with the recovery of the Atlantean records, many of the old Atlantean cities and temples that had not been entirely destroyed in the cataclysm were also rebuilt at this time. Many more structures were, however, dismantled to recover valuable materials and components. With the disappearance of Atlantean civilization, gone too was its entire technological-industrial complex. The neo-Atlantean civilization would therefore largely depend on those few decaying remnants of Atlantean technology that were left after the cataclysm. In this context, we may better justify the strict control imposed in neo-Atlantean times over practically every form of technology. The control of Atlantean technology was what allowed a small ruling elite to exert nearly absolute dominance over the vast masses of mankind in the post-

Flood period.

With time, this crystallized into a rigid caste system, built as much on ethnic and racial lines as it was on the control of resources. In its final expressions, the neo-Atlantean exarchy was an empire of the Nephilim race. It was to maintain the genetic "purity" of the Atlantean bloodlines that practices such as endogamy and consanguineous marriage developed among the ruling aristocracies of nearly all neo-Atlantean societies, from ancient Egypt to Mexico and Peru.

It seems that while the ruling elite of the neo-Atlantean Empire was of the pure Atlantean stock, the Nephilim (75 percent Atlantean and only 25 percent hominin) constituted a sort of technocratic aristocracy and administrative class. The vast majority of the population belonged, then, to the Aryan Cro-Magnon race, being only 50 percent Atlantean**.** It is unlikely, however, that the pure Atlantean and Nephilim component ever represented more than a very small percentage of the total neo-Atlantean population. The lower classes were hence forbidden from possessing any form of technology and were subject to various degrees of personal restraints and prohibitions, an echo of which may be found in many ancient codes of religious law.

The control of Atlantean technology allowed the Nephilim elite to rule firmly over an immense empire. It was only in the later stages of the neoAtlantean civilization, amidst climate change and growing demographic imbalances, that revolts began to erupt. It is not clear when and how the neo-Atlantean civilization turned into the gloomy totalitarian empire of its later and final stages, so well portrayed by the sheer monumentality and almost superhuman character of its final architectural expressions. Rather than restoring a golden age, this new Atlantean Empire brought about a dark age of brutal slavery and oppression, eventually leading to the final demise of Atlantean civilization itself. In this final turn of events, the persecutors became the persecuted. Chased and hunted down to the last man, woman, and child, the last of the Atlantean Nephilim took refuge on the remote and inaccessible mountain peaks from which their ancestors had originally descended, building great mountain fortresses where the last flames of the Atlantean tradition would only slowly fade into oblivion with the passing of many centuries.

The neo-Atlantean civilization was certainly remarkable for its almost fanatical dedication to a single ideal—the resurrection of a lost world. No

price seemed too high for this goal to be achieved, not even the ultimate sacrifice of their entire race. Yet the great work remained unfinished, turning the neo-Atlantean project into the ultimate Tower of Babel of human ambition.

Why, then, was nearly every energy on the planet diverted into this colossal effort, even as everything else was apparently lost?

A NEW GEOGRAPHY OF PLACES OF POWER

An answer to this question can only come from a detailed study of the monumental legacy of neo-Atlantean civilization. As this would be far beyond the scope of this book, we will limit ourselves to providing a general outline of a theory of places of power that will be developed to a much greater depth in a future work.

Nearly all sacred sites on the planet share a complex system of earth-sky correlations. It was at these particular places that the mystical marriage of heaven and earth, of celestial and terrestrial energies was consumed. These sites acted in a way as coupled harmonic oscillators to amplify and direct the paths of the Earth's geomagnetic currents. Many laborious pyramids and great megalithic monuments were built in remote, nearly inaccessible locations for this sole purpose. To use the words of John Michell, "A great scientific instrument lies sprawled over the entire surface of the globe." Yet we know neither its purpose nor the identity of its builders. No one knows how the worldwide task was achieved, nor for which reason these people from outside the range of history devoted all their skills and resources to it, covering virtually the whole Earth, from horizon to horizon, with a network of standing stones, pyramids, and mounds.

Perhaps the solution to the mystery lies in the way the structures on the ground seemingly mark the pattern of the underground streams of the telluric and geomagnetic currents. Today, we neither understand the exact nature of these currents nor do we know of any way by which they can be regulated. Yet Michell's extraordinary conclusion was that "the massive works of the prehistoric landscape architects may have determined rather than marked the paths of the current," with the magnetic centers lying "in straight rows across

the country with a precision that characterizes human construction rather than the work of nature."[55]

The mystery deepens when one considers how these terrestrial alignments also find their correspondent in the sky. Pyramids and temples were carefully aligned toward the rising and setting of significant stars and constellations at specific points in time: *as above, so below;* the same pattern was written inasmuch in the sacred geometry of our planet as it was in the stars. Such was the goal of all alchemy and magical science: the union of the terrestrial and the celestial through the introduction of solar or atmospheric energy into the terrestrial life current at the precise astrological moment marking the juncture of the greatest harmonic activity.

For thousands of years, this knowledge provided the means by which Atlantean civilization was sustained. Then the mirror of heaven broke, and earth and sky became again separated. As Michell put it, "All we can suppose is that some overwhelming disaster, whether or not of natural origin, destroyed a system whose maintenance depended upon the control of certain natural forces across the entire earth."[56]

This disaster, we must assume, was the same that caused the destruction and submersion of the largest portion of the island of Atlantis in 10,961 BCE, at the beginning of the Younger Dryas. With the loss of the Atlantean center, a new world center had to be established, where the energies of the entire world grid could be gathered in one place. This doubtless required a unified effort under the direction of a single authority capable of ensuring the synchronous operation of the whole ley system[*26] through the establishment of a new grid of places of power across the entire world.

The Younger Dryas cataclysm permanently changed the Earth's axis of rotation. It also altered the flow of the Earth's magnetic currents, breaking any correspondence that may have existed in former times between terrestrial and celestial coordinates. A new world grid of sacred sites had to be established, with mounds marking the key intersections, later evolving into the pyramids and temples of the historical period.

A colossal surge of construction characterized the beginning of the neo-Atlantean period, the product of a culture that had already mapped and surveyed the entire planet to a degree of accuracy that has only been matched in modern times. Then suddenly, all construction stopped. It would resume,

in much cruder forms, only thousands of years later. At Giza, Tiwanaku, Cuzco, and Baalbek, the great work was abandoned. As suddenly as it had started, this unprecedented surge of energy waned.

A second cometary strike in 9600 BCE may have been responsible. This cataclysm, the same that caused the final sinking of the island of Poseidonis as recorded by Plato, also brought the first epoch of neoAtlantean civilization to an end. Undermined by internal tensions and unable to recover from the loss of the motherland, the neo-Atlantean exarchy collapsed. A sudden rise in sea levels after 9600 BCE brought further devastation to coastal settlements. Hierakonpolis itself may have been submerged at this time.

We do not know if the new ley system was already operational when disaster struck a second time. The Great Pyramid and other megalithic constructions across Europe and South America bear evidence of partial stone vitrification and cracking under the effect of intense heat. If so, at least some portions of the ley system may have been operational by 9600 BCE. In the centuries that followed, new attempts would be made to repair and complete limited sections of the ley network. These efforts, however, lacked both the resources and the coordination required to establish a truly global system as it had existed in Atlantean times. Perhaps the reason the world grid could not be fully restored to its original state lies in the loss of the main Atlantean energy centers located on what was left of the island of Poseidonis.

THE FATE OF ATLANTIS

Even as the centers of neo-Atlantean civilization shifted, respectively, toward Egypt and South America, the surviving portions of Poseidonis continued to play an important role in transoceanic communications. Climatological evidence suggests that Atlantis still existed as a modestly sized insular landmass or a chain of islands in the North Atlantic until about 9600 BCE. It was its sinking that allowed the warm Gulf Current to reach again the coasts of northern Europe, thus effectively putting an end to the Ice Age. As Graham Hancock pointedly observes in *Magicians of the Gods*, “The very radical climate changes at both the onset and the termination of the Younger Dryas were global and were accomplished within the span of a human generation.”[57]

Hancock suggests that 11,600 years ago, “the earth interacted again with the debris stream of the same fragmenting comet that had caused the Younger Dryas to start 12,800 years ago.”[58] Unlike an impact on land or ice, a deep-sea impact would have thrown up vast plumes of water vapor, creating “a greenhouse effect that caused global warming rather than global cooling.”[59] A warming of 7°C (12.6°F) was completed in less than fifty years in the North Atlantic and was accompanied by a rapid retreat of sea-ice cover. Such an exceptional event by climatological standards can only be explained by the sinking of the last remnants of Atlantis, which had hitherto acted as a barrier to warm water circulation in the North Atlantic.

“When Atlantis finally sank,” wrote Estonian professor E. F. Hagemeister, “The warm equatorial current moved in a broad stream northwards, carrying warmth to the ice-bound shores of Europe. The climate rapidly grew warmer and the ice melted or retreated to the North. The Ice Age ended.”[60]

The small islands known in classical times as Scheria, Ogygia, and Thule may have been all that was left of the Atlantean landmass above water after this last subsidence.

A no less important effect of the subsidence of the continent of Atlantis at the end of the Younger Dryas was the onset of much drier conditions and the desertification of the Sahara. No longer impeded by the Atlantean landmass, the warm equatorial current, which ran toward the Strait of Gibraltar, now veered to the west, and its place along the northwest coast of Africa was taken by the colder Canary Current. As a consequence, the climate over much of North Africa became drier, with significantly reduced precipitation. Once a verdant valley, the Sahara turned into an arid desert. Drought and famine, combined with earthquakes and volcanic eruptions, triggered mass migrations of peoples into Egypt and the Mediterranean. It was these events that, according to W. Scott-Elliott, brought the Atlantean divine dynasties to an end and ultimately resulted in the downfall of neo-Atlantean Egypt. After that, “Eras of culture were followed by times of lawlessness, during which all artistic and scientific development was lost.”[61] The post-Atlantean period had begun.

10

THE NEO-ATLANTEAN EMPIRES

Before we move on to describe the events of the post-Atlantean period, a few words must be spent to describe the civilization of the Neo-Atlantean period that arose out of the ashes of the second Atlantean Empire in the time between the two cataclysms.

A JOURNEY INTO NEO-ATLANTEAN EGYPT

In the aftermath of the Younger Dryas cataclysm and following the sinking of the largest portion of the Atlantean landmass in 10,961 BCE, Egypt of all the countries received the greatest influx of Atlantean refugees. By then, Egypt was already the seat of an important Atlantean colony. According to the chronology of Manetho, the demigods ruled over Egypt from 14,125 BCE until 12,870 BCE. Their reign was followed by a dynasty of “Other Kings” between 12,870 BCE and 11,053 BCE.[*27] Manetho then records a dynasty of 30 “Kings from Memphis” from 11,053 BCE until 9263 BCE, after which royal power seems to have shifted briefly to the south with an ephemeral

dynasty of ten kings from Thinis (Abydos). After 8913 BCE, no king is recorded until the reign of King Menes of the First Dynasty (ca. 3100 BCE). During this enormous period of time, only “Shades and Spirits of the Dead” were said to have inhabited the country of Egypt, signaling perhaps a complete collapse of political authority. A summary of Manetho’s chronology up to the beginning of the First Dynasty is provided in Table 2.6.

The oldest Egyptian texts similarly preserve the memory of a race of demigods known as the Shemsu-Hor, or Followers of Horus, who unified the country and brought with them a sacred science of divine origin. This race did not originate in Egypt, but moved there from the west across the Sahara.[1] Proof of this migration can be found in the rich rock art of the western Sahara and the Sahel, much of which dates back to a time before 10,000 BCE, when the Sahara was still a verdant valley.

Mystery of the Dynastic Race

If a foreign people, maybe from Atlantis, migrated into Egypt from the Sahara, this could explain the mysterious appearance of what Egyptologists Sir William M. Flinders Petrie and Walter Emery called the “Dynastic race,” which first brought into Egypt knowledge of agriculture, stone-working, and metalworking.

Over the course of several excavation campaigns at the predynastic cemetery of Naqada, Petrie found puzzling evidence of two radically different burial practices. The first was associated with a culture that Petrie called Naqada I, and it involved burials in a fetal position inside shallow pits dug directly into the desert sand. The people of this culture were of relatively short stature, with broad (mesocephalic) skulls. A few of the graves, however, contained the remains of individuals buried in a lying, fully stretched position. Those bodies were buried in tombs lined with bricks, which often contained valuable luxury items such as lapis lazuli and amulets made of stone, bone, and ivory. The skeletons found in these graves were also significantly taller, with peculiarly elongated (dolichocephalic) skulls. Petrie called this second culture Naqada II. To Petrie and other Egyptologists, there could be no doubt that this culture represented the “civilized aristocracy” of the predynastic and early dynastic period. Indeed, since the time of the earliest dynasties, their civilization appeared already mature, with

a complete system of writing, a carefully established calendar, a social order, a census, and a perfectly ordered myth and cult— all things that in the words of R. A. Schwaller de Lubicz, "obviously testify to a long civilized epoch preceding the historical period."[2] To Petrie, the only explanation was that this culture had come to Egypt already fully formed from elsewhere. It was "a great European confederacy," he wrote, that had invaded the Nile valley multiple times, subjugating the local indigenous population and bringing along a more advanced culture.[3]

Similar to Petrie, Emery proposed that a more advanced elite from some yet undiscovered area passed on its great cultural and scientific achievements to both Egypt and Mesopotamia. This elite only mixed socially with the indigenous Egyptian aristocracy and would later become identified with the legendary Shemsu-Hor of predynastic times.

The Case for Civilization X

The Egyptian civilization of the pharaonic period was not a new development, but a legacy. The ancient Egyptians themselves believed that every aspect of their cult, ritual, science, and architecture had its origins in remote antiquity, at a time called Zep Tepi, or the "First Occasion." Plato similarly considered the origins of Egyptian civilization to date back more than ten thousand years.[4]

Author Edward F. Malkowski believes that a great civilization, which he calls "Civilization X," preceded that of the pharaohs. Already in 1925, Cayce had been among the first to suggest the existence of a prehistoric Egyptian civilization derived directly from Atlantis. In his famous readings, Cayce told a story of two subsequent migrations from Atlantis into Egypt— before and after the Flood. It was at the time of this second migration that the Great Pyramid and many of the other great megalithic monuments that we can admire in Egypt today were built—"10,490 to 10,390 [years] before the Prince entered into Egypt," according to Cayce's chronology.[5]

Egyptology has long maintained that the Great Pyramid was built as a tomb for the pharaoh Khufu of the Fourth Dynasty (ca. 2589–2566 BCE). In recent years, however, a growing body of evidence has come to indicate a predynastic origin of the Great Pyramid and the Sphinx. The inevitable conclusion is that a great civilization of prehistoric antiquity built the

pyramids, temples, and obelisks that appear to have been already perfectly formed at the beginning of Egyptian civilization and that these monuments were simply appropriated by the kings of later dynasties. Although many of the remains of Civilization X may now lie deep beneath the waters of the Mediterranean or buried under the mud of centuries, a vast monumental legacy still testifies to the splendor of neo-Atlantean Egypt.

A Civilization in Granite

There is no precise inventory or catalogue of all the neo-Atlantean monuments in Egypt. If we only account for those that have survived in a reasonable state of preservation to this day and exclude the ones that are known only from historical sources, their number would still be in the hundreds or thousands.

The forms of neo-Atlantean architecture are neat and precise; its scale often colossal. The largest blocks in the Great Pyramid weigh an estimated 70 tons. Two-hundred-ton limestone blocks were employed in the construction of Khafre's mortuary temple near the Second Pyramid, and a single monolithic lintel in the so-called Wall of the Crow at Giza is estimated to weigh over 300 tons. These almost superhuman feats of engineering speak of a lost technology far in advance of its time. The original builders of these structures seem, moreover, to have possessed a great facility at working with granite and other extremely hard stones, such as diorite, porphyry, quartzite, and basalt. They possessed the means to efficiently quarry, cut, shape, and assemble mass quantities of these stones, often from quarries located hundreds of miles away (see Plate 9).

Symbolic as well as functional reasons dictated the choice of building materials. Granite was used for the bottom exterior courses of the Second Pyramid and the first sixteen courses of the Third Pyramid's casing, as well as many structural elements, such as columns, pillars, doorposts, and lintels. Also lined in granite were the walls and ceiling of the King's Chamber in the Great Pyramid. Coffins and sarcophagi were carved out of granite, quartzite, and porphyry. Basalt and alabaster, polished to a mirror finish, were used for the floors, whereas the fine Tura limestone was chosen for the casing of pyramids. The core of these structures was usually of limestone and was formed of immense stone blocks masterfully joined together to give the

impression of a single, solid mass of masonry (see Plate 10).

This civilization also produced countless mobile stone artifacts. An astonishing cache of nearly forty thousand stone vessels was uncovered between 1933 and 1936 from galleries below the Step Pyramid of Sakkara: dishes so accurately shaped as to show no deviation from a perfect circle, bowls that can stand perfectly balanced on a single point, and also rock-crystal jars with walls just a millimeter thin. To the Egyptologists' great astonishment, whatever tools were used to carve these delicate vessels could cut through granite at a rate of 1 millimeter (one twenty-fifth of an inch) per rotation—nearly five hundred times faster than a modern diamond drill.[6]

Additionally, this civilization must have possessed straight and circular saws, lathes, and tubular drills of the hardest metal. The saw marks displayed by one granite block discovered in 1995 near the ruined pyramid of Abu Rawash could only have been produced by a circular saw with the incredible diameter of nearly 11 meters (36 feet).[7]

Many statues and colossi bear evidence of equally complex mechanical methods of cutting stone. These statues often contain tridimensional contours that morph into linear and circular ones along multiple axes of symmetry, such as only the most advanced CNC (computer numerical control) machines of today could produce.[8] These are telltale marks of the use of tools that have left no trace in the archaeological record.

Water Erosion and a Far Older Sphinx

In 1979, researcher John Anthony West became convinced that the evidence for an earlier Egyptian civilization could be found on the Giza plateau. Aided by geologist Robert Schoch of Boston University, he demonstrated that the body of the Sphinx must have been subject to centuries of torrential rainfall at a time when the climate of North Africa was much wetter than today. (See Plate 11 for evidence of water erosion on the body of the Sphinx. Compare with the relative absence of erosion from the head of the statue, which was almost certainly recarved during the Pharaonic period of Egyptian civilization.) This would push back the age of the Sphinx to a period between ten thousand and seven thousand years ago. Malkowski similarly calculates that it would have taken 11,750 years for water to eat through three feet of limestone—the depth of the erosion marks visible on the Sphinx's body.[9]

Further confirmation of this theory comes from the astronomical orientation of the monuments on the Giza plateau. According to Graham Hancock and Robert Bauval, the Sphinx would have acted as an ideal equinoctial marker for the Age of Leo in the period 10,970 to 8810 BCE. At that time, the statue would have gazed directly at the equinoctial sunrise, with the constellation of Leo lying just above the eastern horizon at dawn. In the same epoch, the three belt stars of the constellation of Orion would have been at their lowest point in the entire precessional cycle, forming a perfect celestial image of the three Giza pyramids on the ground.[10]

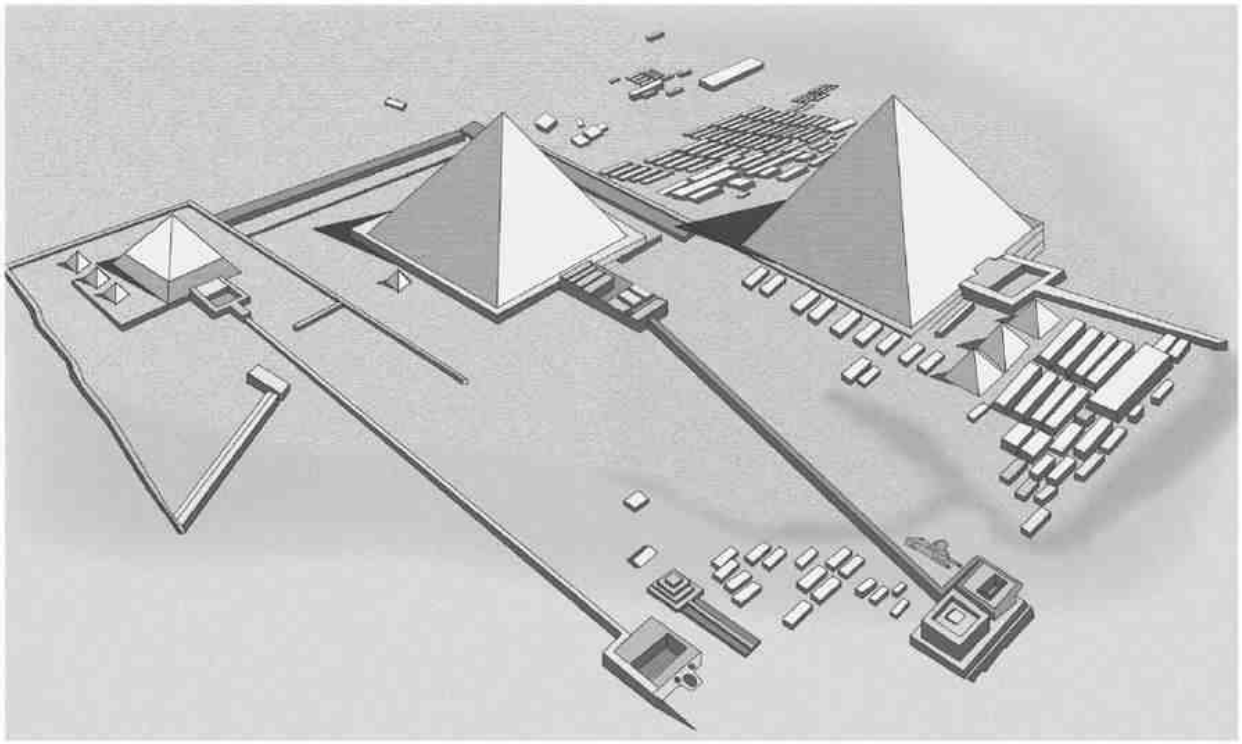


Figure 10.1. View of the three main Giza pyramids and the Sphinx in the time of the Fourth Dynasty, circa 2500 BCE.

There is, indeed, ample evidence to show that the layout of the three main pyramids and of several of the smaller satellite pyramids on the Giza plateau was not the result of different kings building their own separate monuments, but reflected instead a carefully conceived geometric and mathematical plan.

The Great Pyramid—A Miracle in Stone

The Great Pyramid was the crowning glory of neo-Atlantean civilization, the pinnacle of all ancient art and science. It covered an area of 13.11 acres, resting on a square base measuring 230.34 meters (756 feet, or 440 Royal Egyptian cubits) on each side. Its height was originally 146.7 meters (481 feet, or 280 royal Egyptian cubits), making it the tallest man-made structure in the world until the inauguration of the Eiffel Tower in 1889.[*28] For its construction, over 2.3 million blocks of stone were used, weighing a total of 6 million tons. To put this in context, there is more stone in the Great Pyramid alone than in all the churches, chapels, and cathedrals built in England since the time of Christ, or enough to build thirty Empire State Buildings.[11]

It is not only the immense size of the Great Pyramid that challenges our understanding but also the extreme and seemingly supernatural precision with which it was assembled. It is precisely oriented to the cardinal directions, with an accuracy of one-twentieth of a degree, and it rests on a perfectly level platform that is to this day dead level to within 21 millimeters (0.8 inches), despite countless earthquakes and the passing of thousands of years.[12] The average difference in the lengths of its sides is less than 10 centimeters (3.9 inches) over 921 meters (3,022 feet) of the Pyramid's base perimeter. Yet even this is nothing compared with the perfection of the casing. Each casing stone weighed as much as 16 tons and had six sides, thus bringing the total surface of stone that had to be cut and polished to a staggering 80 acres (see Plate 12, showing the apex of the Second Pyramid still clad in its white Tura limestone casing, as an example of how the casing of the Great Pyramid would have looked when still intact). Moreover, this was accomplished for each casing stone to within 1/100 of an inch of mathematical perfection. As researcher William Fix put it, "They built a man-made mountain as meticulously as we cut gems."[13] For Petrie, this was something "to be compared with the finest optician's work on a scale of acres."[14] This extraordinary engineering precision extended into the heart of the building as well. Such is the quality exhibited by the Great Pyramid's masonry, many construction engineers have claimed that the technology does not exist today either to build the Pyramid or even to repair it to its original specifications.[15]

When we consider the dimensions of the Great Pyramid with respect to the Earth, the Pyramid reveals itself to be a perfect model of the Earth's Northern Hemisphere on a scale of 1 to 43,200. This makes the base

perimeter of the Great Pyramid equal to exactly half a minute of latitude at the equator.[16] The number 432 also turns out to be related to the sixtieth part of the precessional cycle of 25,920 years.

If we add to this the fact that the Great Pyramid lies almost exactly on the thirtieth parallel, marking one-third of the distance between the North Pole and the equator, the only possible conclusion, according to Fix, is that "thousands of years before Christ, someone measured the earth with extreme precision and recorded this information in the dimensions of the Great Pyramid: Here is the greatest mystery in all archaeology and one of the great mysteries of the earth. What civilization possessed the means to do this thousands of years ago? What happened to that civilization? When was this message recorded and why?"[17]

A Map of Egypt before the Sands

At least seven more pyramids were built in Egypt over a period of less than two hundred years, including a volume of stone of 25 million tons sufficient to build four Great Pyramids. In addition to the three Giza pyramids, we should include in this calculation the Bent and Red Pyramids of Dahshur (see Plates 13 and 14), the Pyramid of Meidum (See Plate 15), and the two unfinished pyramids of Abu Rawash and Zawiyet-el-Aryan. At no other time in the history of the world would a similar construction program ever be attempted.

The pyramids were constructed in addition to the countless megalithic temples, colossal statues, and obelisks scattered throughout the rest of Egypt. The granite temples of Giza and the enigmatic Osireion of Abydos must date to the same remote age as the pyramids. The axis of the great temple of Karnak (see Plate 16) is aligned to the position of the summer solstice sunset at a time when the obliquity of the ecliptic was 25°9'55"— more than eleven thousand years ago.[18] At Thebes, as at Giza, later kings appropriated the relics of a bygone age, adding their own names and inscriptions. Such must have been the case with some of the largest statues that decorated the mortuary temples of Amenophis III and Ramses II: the famous Colossi of Memnon, each weighing over 720 tons, and the great colossus of the Ramesseum, which no modern machine can lift, weighing more than 1,000 tons (see Plates 17, 18, and 19). How could these immense statues be moved

more than 675 kilometers (420 miles) overland from their quarries at Gebel-el-Ahmar, near modern-day Cairo?[19] Yet we know of even larger statues, such as the broken colossus of Tanis, which Petrie estimated once stood 28 meters (92 feet) tall from tip to toe, with a weight of perhaps 2,000 tons, transported more than 900 kilometers (560 miles) from Aswan to Memphis—by what means nobody knows.[20]

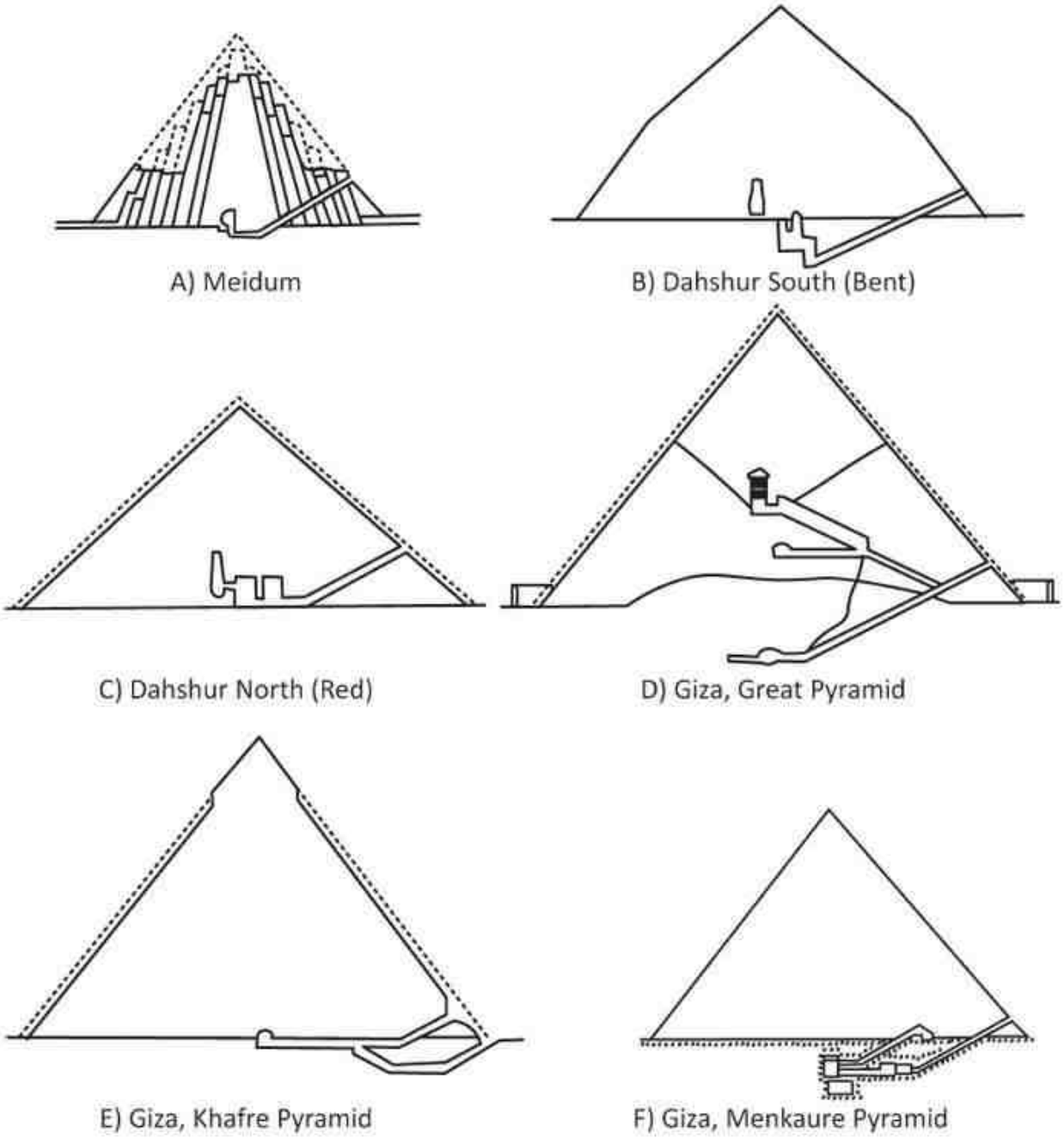


Figure 10.2. Relative size and internal arrangement of the six surviving Fourth Dynasty pyramids in Egypt.

Countless more monuments must have succumbed to the ravages of time and the attacks of man. Nothing remains of the ancient and once famous cities of Tanis, Mendes, Bubastis, Sebennytos, and Sais, which already existed, according to Plato, in the time of Atlantis, 11,600 years ago.

The End of Neo-Atlantean Egypt

What happened to the great civilization that bequeathed us such an immense cultural and monumental legacy over a period of hundreds, if not thousands of years?

The tenth millennium BCE saw radical changes in climate over large portions of North Africa, when a once verdant Sahara slowly began turning into the desert we know today. A particularly dramatic account of the events that may have characterized this turbulent period is contained in the famous Famine Stela on the island of Sahel, facing the Nile at Aswan. It reads, “Hapi [the annual inundation of the Nile] had failed to come in time. In a period of seven years, Grain was scant, Kernels were dried up. . . . Every man robbed his twin. . . . Children cried. . . . The hearts of the old were needy. . . . Temples were shut, shrines covered with dust, everyone was in distress.”[21]

Another ancient Egyptian document, the Middle Kingdom Admonitions of Ipuwer, similarly alludes to a collapse of political authority following a prolonged famine. “Indeed the desert is throughout the land, the nomes are laid waste and barbarians from abroad have come to Egypt. . . . All is ruin!”[22]

And also, a few lines later, “The king has been deposed by the rabble. . . . What the pyramid concealed has become empty. . . . The land has been deprived of the kingship by lawless men. . . . Gold is lacking and materials for every kind of craft have come to an end. . . . Indeed the builders have become cultivators.”[23]

Usually attributed to the time of the Old Kingdom collapse (ca. 2181 BCE), these words may also apply to the time around the turn of the tenth millennium BCE, which was similarly characterized by intense climate change and mass migrations of peoples across the Sahara.

At that time, we find the appearance in the archaeological record of a "new race," representing a complete break from the previous civilization of the neo-Atlantean period. This new race was entirely ignorant not only of the arts of writing, sculpture, painting, and building in stone, but even of the simplest inventions, such as the potter's wheel. They buried their dead in a contracted fetal position inside crude holes in the ground and only produced the simplest forms of handmade pottery. Their skulls were of the mesocephalic type, similar to the Naqada I culture of which Petrie had found evidence in the cemeteries of Upper Egypt. This type of skull is characterized by a cranial capacity of just 1,310 cubic centimeters (80 cubic inches), which is significantly smaller than the average 1,460 cubic centimeters (90 cubic inches) of the markedly dolichocephalic dynastic race.[24] At the same time, many new race burials appeared to intrude into older tombs and structures that Petrie attributed to the Fourth Dynasty of the Old Kingdom (ca. 2620–2500 BCE). To Petrie, there could be no doubt that the new race was well acquainted with Old Kingdom models, of which their artifacts appeared to be but very crude copies "made by hand, instead of on the wheel, like the originals." As unlikely as it might sound, Petrie's conclusion was that new race invaders had either "destroyed or expelled the whole Egyptian population" and that they had done so, moreover, almost without a fight, of which he found no evidence among the hundreds of skeletal remains he excavated.[25]

Petrie found evidence of the new race throughout the entire Nile valley, but he incorrectly situated its arrival in Egypt during the First Intermediate Period (2181–2055 BCE), even when all the evidence suggested that the new race was, in fact, one and the same as the Neolithic Naqada I culture. To accept this, however, would have implied also a radical redating of the monuments intruded on by the new race and thus of the entire pyramid age of ancient Egypt.

A better interpretation of the evidence is that the new race was no new race at all, but represented instead a Neolithic population that had entered Egypt around the end of the last ice age following the collapse of neo-Atlantean rule.

Certainly, the original dynastic race of neo-Atlantean Egypt did not go without a fight either. It does not seem a coincidence that some of the largest and most enigmatic vestiges of the late neo-Atlantean period in Egypt were,

in fact, immense waterworks—a last desperate attempt to reverse climate change and arrest desertification. Thousands of years before the construction of the first Aswan Dam in 1902, the ancestors of the dynastic Egyptians barred the course of the Nile and built vast reservoirs for irrigation and agriculture. A 15-kilometer (9-mile) canal, known in ancient times as the Mer-Wer (the "Great Canal"), was built between Lake Moeris and the Nile. It was controlled by a system of double dams and locks that regulated the flow of water in and out of the lake around the time of the Nile's annual flooding. These immense locks were still in existence in the time of the geographer Strabo (first century BCE), which may explain the belief, also shared by Herodotus, that the whole of Lake Moeris was artificial. With a circumference of 3,600 stades (nearly 650 kilometers or 404 miles) and a depth of 50 fathoms, it was a work so marvelous that it surpassed even the pyramids.[26] "How many myriads of men laboring for how many years were required for its completion?" asked an amazed Diodorus of Sicily in the first century BCE. He was even more amazed when the priests told him that the lake was built during the reign of King Moeris, over twelve thousand years before.[27]

Other dams were built on some of the smaller wadis, or seasonal rivers, that flowed into the Nile valley, some of which were continuously repaired until dynastic times. The most famous of these was the Sadd-el-Kafara, the "Dam of the Infidels," built some 10 kilometers (6.2 miles) southeast of Helwan on the Wadi-al-Garawi. It measured an impressive 111 meters (121 yards) long and 14 meters (15 yards) tall, with a base width of 98 meters (107 yards).

The construction of these immense waterworks would have lasted through much of the neo-Atlantean period. By the ninth millennium BCE, however, insufficient flooding from the Nile would have rendered even a work of the magnitude of Lake Moeris entirely useless. A solution was apparently found in the deep water table of the Western desert, yet this solution also faced the problem of how to lift the water from many meters deep underground. The enigmatic Osireion of Abydos, which was connected to the Nile by means of a canal, may have been designed with this purpose in mind (see Plates 20 and 21). According to researcher Edward Kunkel, author in 1973 of the book *Pharaoh's Pump,* the Great Pyramid itself may have served as an immense water pump. The entire system would have been fed by

underground aqueducts connected to a hypothetical Western Nile river (the so-called Ur-Nile), surviving in the form of fossil aquifers located deep under the Western (Libyan) Desert.

At the end of the Younger Dryas, between 10,000 and 9000 BCE, great sand dunes stretched over a formerly verdant Sahara, forcing mass migrations of peoples into Egypt. Without the seasonal floods from the Nile, the country also lost its main source of agricultural sustenance. Amid the great famine and political chaos that ensued, construction projects stopped everywhere. In order to survive, the neo-Atlantean elite was forced to relocate to other lands in the Near East and across the Mediterranean that were less exposed to the effects of climate change.[28] Only their great monuments remained, silent memorials to the splendid civilization of pre-sand Egypt.

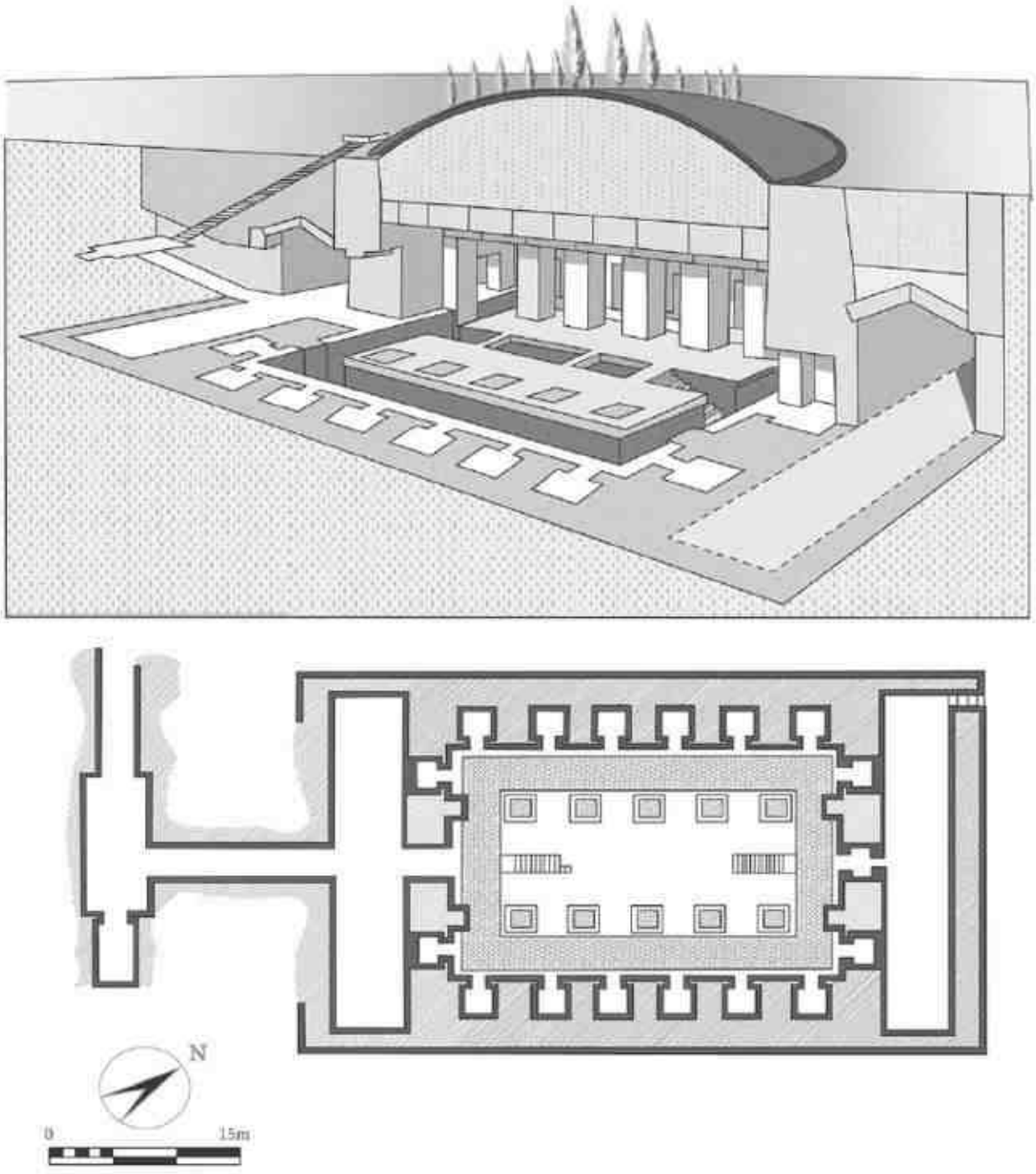


Figure 10.3. Reconstruction and plan of the Osireion of Abydos (after Naville, 1914).

THE REIGN OF THE WATCHERS IN THE

LEVANT

Ancient mythologies and archaeological remains testify to the existence of very ancient ties between Egypt and the Levant since at least the late neo-Atlantean period. According to Sanchoniathon and Philo of Byblos, Egypt and Phoenicia existed as sister-nations, each ruled by the sons and daughters of Kronos, the Atlantean Saturn.[29]

The whole region contains extensive megalithic ruins, particularly in the area around Mount Hermon and the ancient cities of Heliopolis (Baalbek), Damascus, and Jerusalem. Along the coast, the ancient cities of Tyre, Byblos, Beirut, and Aradus testify to the intensity of commercial relationships and ties between Egypt and the Levant.

Many of these sites bear a significant association with the fallen angels and their Nephilim progeny. It was in the area around Mount Hermon that, according to biblical sources, the Watchers first took mortal wives and taught humanity the secrets of heaven.

Kharsag—Where Heaven and Earth Met

The Kharsag tablets, studied and translated by Christian and Barbara O'Brien, tell the story of how the Watchers, there called Anannage, or "Shining Ones," established the first agricultural communities in the region around Mount Hermon. The account has many parallels with the apocryphal Book of Enoch, and it provides an almost unique glimpse in the everyday life of a neo-Atlantean settlement in the highlands of the ancient Near East.[30]

Prior to the arrival of the Anannage, the region was inhabited by primitive hunter-gatherers who lived a miserable existence of sustenance in the mountains. The Anannage taught them how to plow and irrigate the land, plant fruit trees, and sow grains of different kinds. They introduced domesticated sheep and cattle and taught the people how to build with wood and stone.

The Anannage also established a number of command centers across the Near East, the most important of which were located in Jerusalem and Baalbek.

The Atlantean Temple Mount of Jerusalem

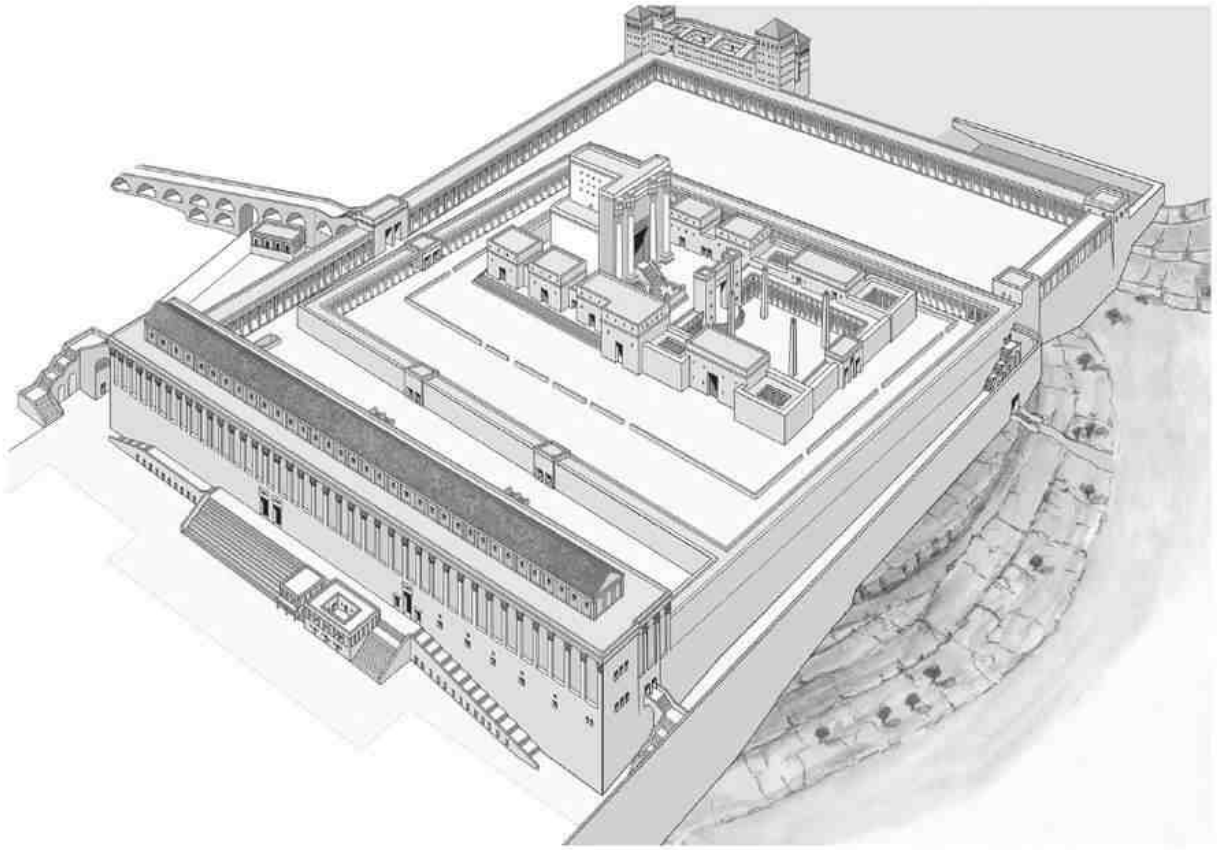
The origins of Jerusalem's Temple Mount are lost in the mists of prehistory. The site contains the largest megalithic stone platform in the world, measuring 488 by 315 meters (1,601 by 1,033 feet) at its widest—enough to contain three Great Pyramids. A holy site for the three great monotheistic religions, the Temple Mount rests on gigantic megalithic foundations, with some stones weighing over 500 tons (see Plate 22). The temple itself was almost entirely rebuilt by King Herod in 19 BCE in the shape of a square measuring one stadium (180 meters, or 590 feet) on each side. According to the testimony of Josephus, it was built of stones "white and strong," each having the enormous dimensions of "twenty-five cubits long, eight cubits high and about twelve cubits in breadth." The depth of the foundations was immense, reaching 300 cubits (150 meters, or 164 yards) at their deepest. When completed, it was itself "the most prodigious work that was ever heard of by man."[31] Yet it is unclear how much of this stupendous structure was, in fact, the product of Herod's work and how much this king had simply appropriated and restored.

Many architectural features of the Temple Mount's construction show that it was built in stages over a considerable period of time. Of the Western Wall, only seven megalithic stone courses survive aboveground, consisting of large white limestone ashlars weighing between 15 and 50 tons (see Plate 23). There are, however, another seventeen courses belowground, extending far below the Herodian street level (see Plates 24, 25, and 26). The finish of the blocks shows that these were not merely foundation courses and that their construction must therefore long predate the Herodian expansion.

The portion of the Temple aboveground also contains a number of badly weathered and eroded stones next to other intact ones, suggesting that Herod only repaired sections of an already existing wall (see Plate 27). Similarly, the foundations of the northeast corner lie at an enormous depth, and it is hard to imagine how such a prodigious accumulation of soil—over 50 meters (164 feet) in some places—could have occurred during the generally accepted historical period.[32]

Both the book of Genesis and Josephus suggest that the great megalithic constructions on Jerusalem's Temple Mount already existed long before the arrival of the Israelites into Canaan. Jerusalem was then a city of the Jebusites, one of the Nephilim nations mentioned in the book of

Deuteronomy.[33] While the Temple Mount certainly bears all the hallmarks of neo-Atlantean construction, it remains unclear how much of the present-day platform dates back to that remote age and how much is, in fact, the product of later repairs and additions.



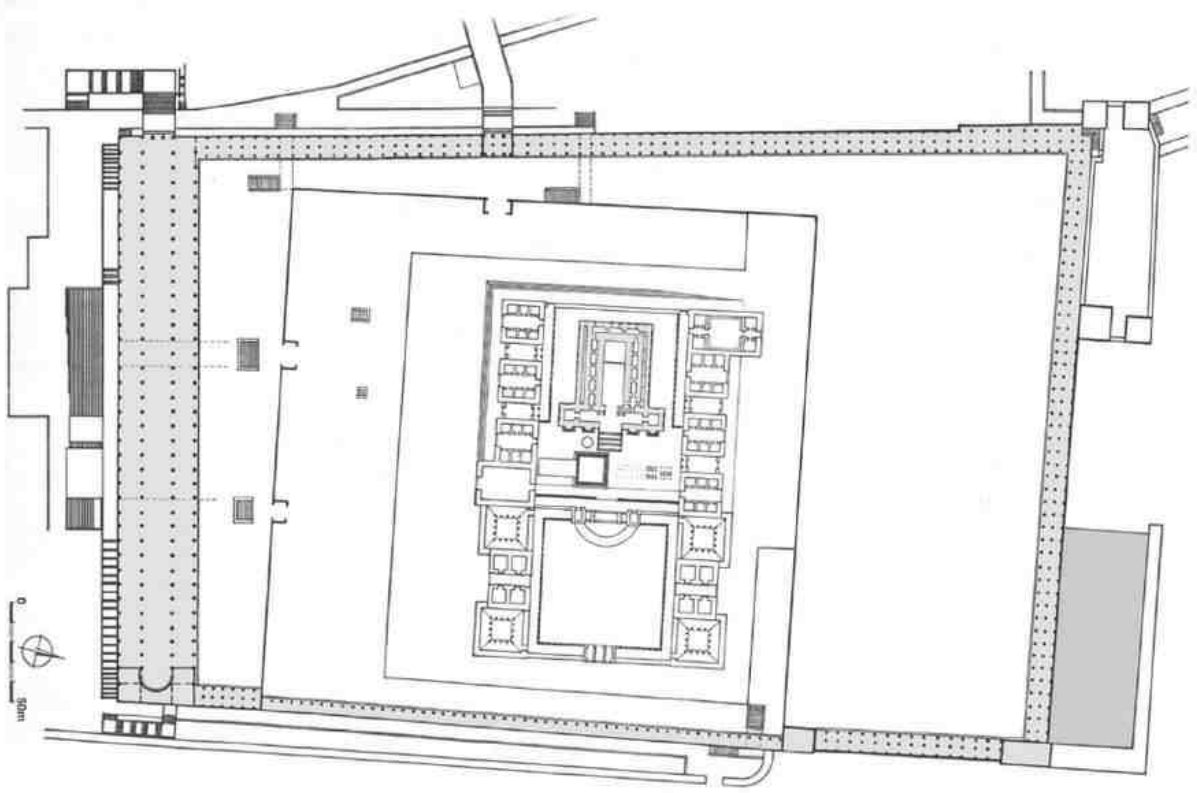


Figure 10.4. Reconstruction and plan of Jerusalem's Temple Mount in the Herodian period (37 BCE–70 CE). Courtesy of Leen Ritmeyer.

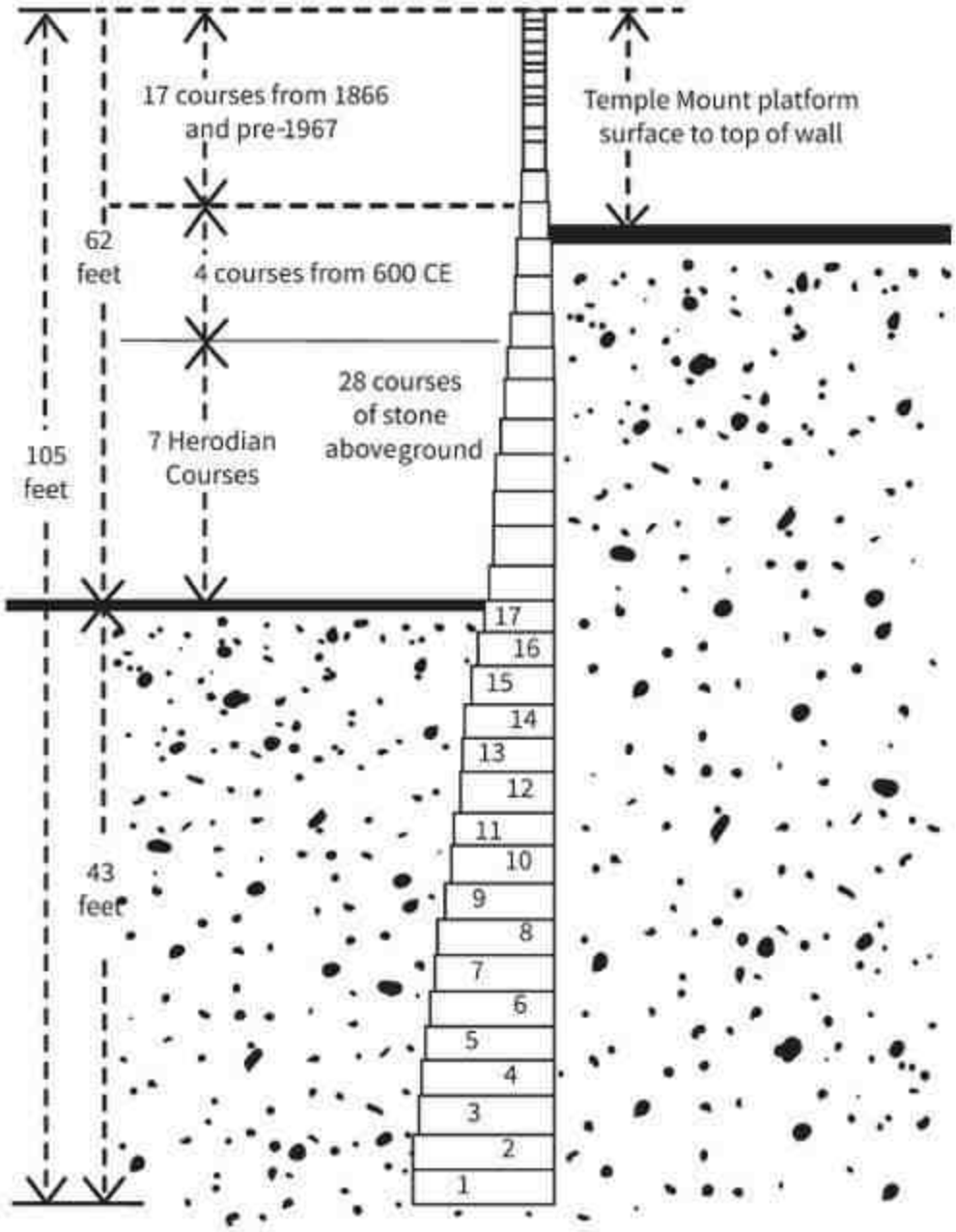


Figure 10.5. Cross section of the foundations of the Western Wall of Jerusalem's Temple Mount, showing the depth of megalithic stone courses below ground (after Wiemers, 2010).

If we look beyond Jerusalem, the great megalithic enclosures of Hebron and Mamre share the same style of construction as the Temple Mount, employing immense limestone blocks up to 8 meters (26 feet) long. According to Josephus, these monuments were already standing in the time of Abraham, when Hebron was, like Jerusalem, still an important Nephilim stronghold.[34] The immense waterworks known as Solomon's Pools near Bethlehem may also date to the same remote age. They consist of three pools measuring between 118 and 179 meters (387 and 587 feet) long and up to 16 meters (52 feet) deep, entirely carved out of the living bedrock at different levels. The pools were connected to the Temple in Jerusalem by means of an underground aqueduct over 20 kilometers (12.4 miles) long and had a capacity of 75 million gallons of water. Together with the enormous cisterns that exist under the Temple Mount itself, these hydraulic projects show a concern for water management not unlike what we have seen in neo-Atlantean Egypt.

The Titans of Baalbek

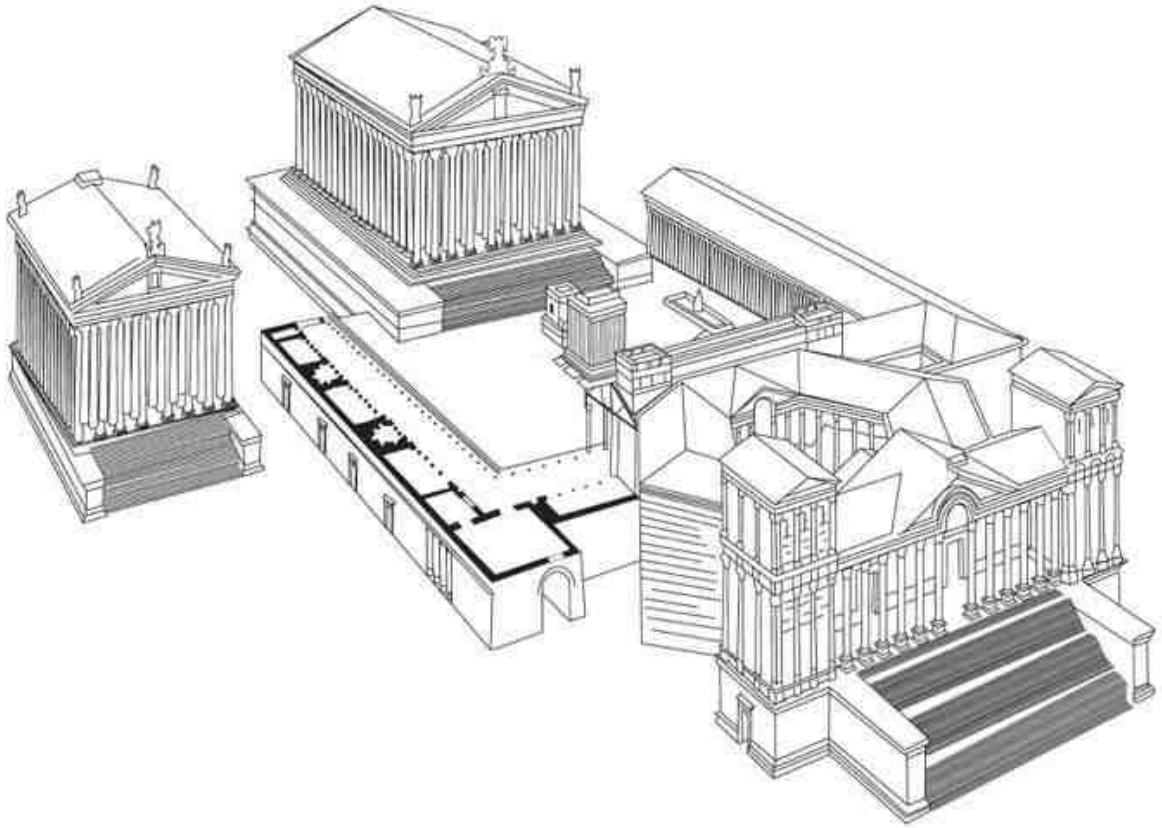
There can be little doubt that the same ancient architects who worked on Jerusalem's Temple Mount and the two megalithic enclosures of Hebron and Mamre also worked at Baalbek.

Sitting in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley at an altitude of 1,170 meters (3,838 feet) above sea level, Baalbek is home to the largest surviving temples of classical antiquity. The true mystery of Baalbek lies, however, in the colossal megalithic platform that serves as a foundation for the two great Roman temples of Jupiter and Bacchus. The dimensions of this platform, at 285 by 180 meters (935 by 591 feet), make it only smaller than Jerusalem's among the great Near Eastern sanctuaries of antiquity. It also contains some immense stones, including a row of twenty-four megaliths, each weighing up to 400 tons. A second course in the sanctuary's western wall, known as the Trilithon, is formed of three stones, each 19 meters (62 feet) long and weighing 800 tons. Despite the stones' enormous size, their joints are so tight that not even a razor blade can be inserted between them.[35] Two even larger stones, weighing between 1,240 and 1,650 tons, were discovered in 2014 at a quarry less than 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) away, next to another 1,000-ton stone block called Hajar el Hibla.[36]

The date of foundation of Baalbek is lost in myth and fables. In his *History of Baalbek*, Lebanese historian Michel Halouf relates a legend according to which Baalbek was built before the Flood by Cain, fell into ruins at the time of the last deluge, and was later rebuilt by a race of giants under the command of Nimrod. Archaeological evidence shows that the area around Baalbek was occupied since at least Neolithic times. A large prehistoric occupational mound near the site has not yet been excavated.[37]

Outside of Baalbek, the memory of an antediluvian race of giants also survived in the region of Mount Hermon, in the over thirty temples and shrines built around the mountain and now divided among the countries of Israel, Lebanon, and Syria.

The supreme sanctuary was located very near the summit of Mount Hermon, at an altitude of 2,814 meters (9,232 feet) above sea level.[38] From this temple, Charles Warren excavated in 1934 a broken stela, now in the British Museum, that seemingly alluded to the oath taken by the Watchers upon descending on Mount Hermon, as described in the Book of Enoch.[39]



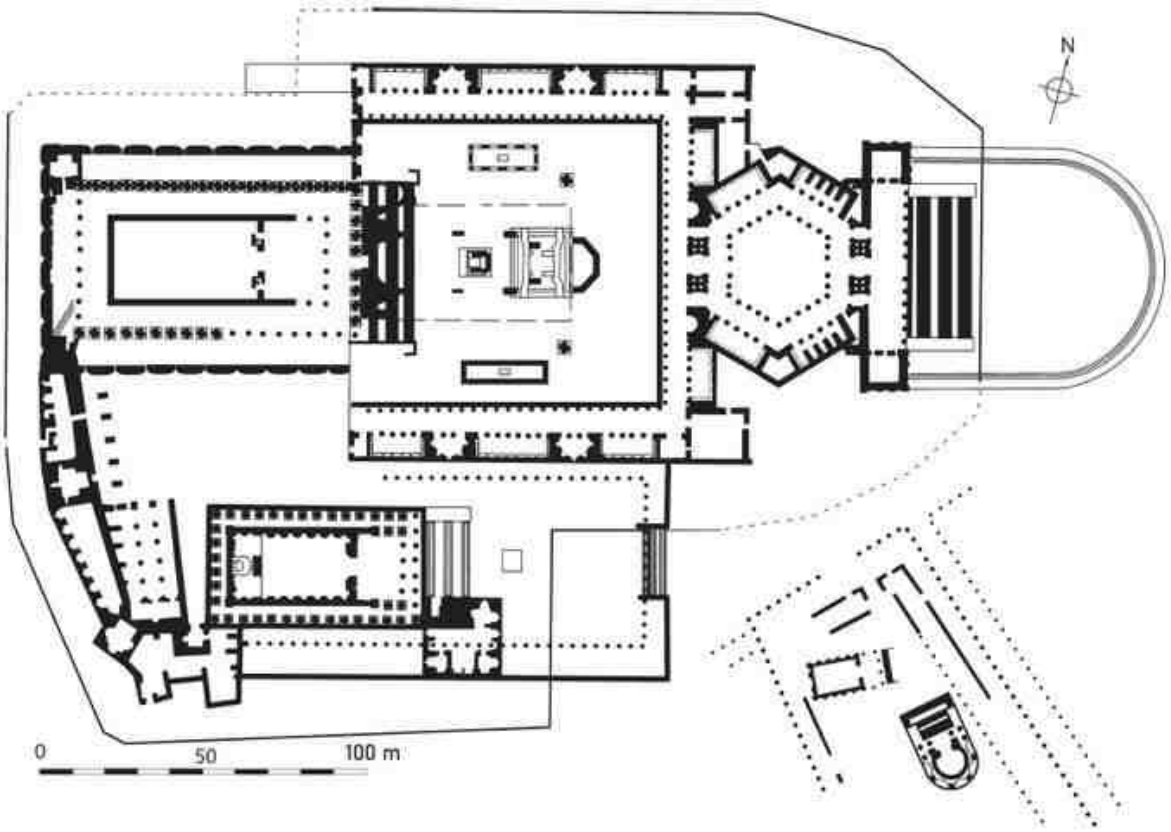

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Figure 10.6. Reconstruction and plan of the sanctuary of Jupiter at Baalbek (after Schulz, 1921).

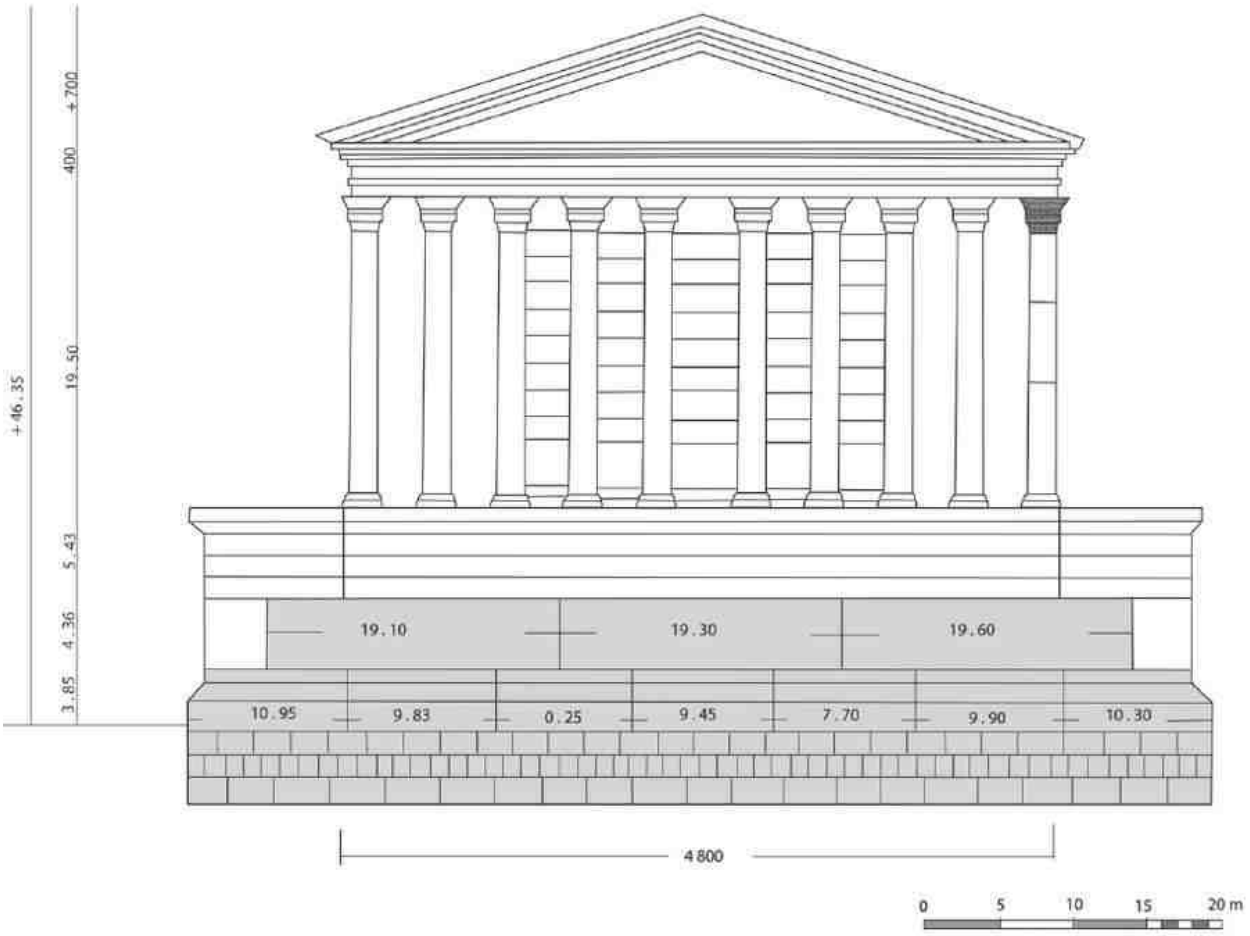

Figure 10.7. The Trilithon of Baalbek, showing megalithic (in gray) and Roman (in white) phases of construction (after Adam and Froidevaux, 1977).

Other sanctuaries were located at Niha, Qsarnaba, Mejdal Anjar, Ain Harcha, and Qalaat Faqra in Lebanon, and at Burqush, Rakhlah, and Hosn Suleiman in Syria. Immense stone blocks weighing in the tens and hundreds of tons were used in the foundations of some of these temples, as well as in the colossal Nimrod fortress in present-day Israel (see Plates 28, 29, and 30).

Temple platforms on a scale comparable to those of Baalbek and Jerusalem also existed at Tadmor (Palmyra) and Damascus, where only a

small portion of the original foundations have been exposed.

Although so much of the monumental legacy of neo-Atlantean civilization in the Levant has succumbed to the ravages of time, what is left provides clear confirmation of the ancient Middle Eastern and biblical traditions that describe the region as a powerful Nephilim stronghold.

THE NEW ATLANTEAN EMPIRES IN THE WEST

Nowhere else is the defensive and militaristic character of neo-Atlantean and post-Atlantean architecture as evident as in the Andes of South America—in the giant fortress of Sacsayhuaman, near Cuzco, and in the many fortified citadels that stretch along the course of the Urubamba River from Pisac to Ollantaytambo and Machu Picchu.

Yet South America also preserves the remnants of a much earlier epoch. The mysterious ruins of Tiwanaku, raised by the immensity of the cataclysm of 10,961 BCE from sea level to their present altitude, and the many legends of vast ruined cities buried deep in the forests of Brazil and Peru show that the origins of South American civilization must be sought beyond the great cordilleras of the Andes. There lies perhaps the answer to the greatest riddle of the prehistoric world.

The Giants of Tiwanaku

The ruins of Tiwanaku are among the most extensive in South America, their age still a matter of debate and speculation. The Incas found the great city already in ruins. They believed that a race of giants had built Tiwanaku prior to the great Flood in which all mankind perished and that it was from there that the god Viracocha had set off on his civilizing mission after the Flood. In 1549, an astonished Pedro Cieza de León wrote:

> “It is not known who built these vast foundations. . . . For at present there are only walls of exquisite workmanship, which must have been standing for many ages. Some of the stones are much worn, and there are others of such enormous size that it causes wonder to imagine

> what human force could have sufficed to move stones so large to the place where we now see them. . . . The work is one of grandeur and magnificence; for I myself fail to understand with what instruments or tools it can have been done. . . . I would dare to say that these are the oldest antiquities in all of Peru."[40]

Some of the largest stone blocks at Tiwanaku and Puma Punku measure as much as 8 meters (26 feet) long, 5 meters (16 feet) wide, and 1.5 meters (5 feet) thick, with an estimated weight of 180 tons (see Plates 31 and 32). The architecture is neat and precise in a way that only ancient Egypt, of all other civilizations, also expressed. These ruins, wrote the celebrated archaeologist and ethnologist Ephraim G. Squier in 1877, "appear to be the work of a people who were thorough masters of an architecture which had no infancy, passed through no period of growth, and of which we find no other examples."[41]

The builders of Tiwanaku were certainly in possession of very advanced stone and metallurgical technology and of sophisticated mechanical methods for cutting, dressing, and polishing the enormous blocks of stone. With its obsessive pattern repetition, Tiwanaku architecture represents, in the words of German researcher Thomas A. Gara, "the earliest example of mass-production of interchangeable parts . . . thousands of years ahead of the industrial age in which we now find ourselves."[42]

Everywhere one sees the remnants of doorways, windows, and pillars, all carved out of the hardest andesite, scattered in the utmost confusion. The evidence of cataclysmic destruction suggests that Tiwanaku was already a great city before the Flood, perhaps as early as the Second Atlantean period. "Nobody who has seen them can doubt that these ruins date to a time much before the Flood," wrote Bishop Antonio de Castro in 1650. Another Jesuit, Father Bernabé Cobo, marveled at the great quantity of stones that could be found buried everywhere within half a league of the ruins proper, saying it was as if "a whole, great city lies buried under the earth."[43]

It has been estimated that less than 2 percent of the total area of the ancient city has been exposed, with at least five separate occupation layers dating back twelve thousand years or more.[44]

While most of the structures visible today date to the period between

1500 BCE and 750 CE, there is evidence that the Tiwanaku culture of the historical period flourished among the ruins of a much older metropolis, whose ruins are only slowly being uncovered from depths of as much as 21 meters (69 feet) belowground. The Austrian archaeologist Arthur Posnansky believed that the ancient metropolis had once been a thriving port on the Pacific Ocean, before it was raised by the cataclysm of 10,961 BCE to its present altitude. His astronomical dating of the ruins suggested for them an age of at least fifteen thousand years, a dating only recently confirmed by Bolivian astronomer Oscar Corvison employing the latest scientific techniques.[45] What is more, many of the structures appear to have never been finished, as if they were "merely the commencement of what their founders had intended to build."[46]

Tiwanaku probably existed as an ephemeral neo-Atlantean capital before a series of devastating earthquakes and a rapidly deteriorating climate forced its population to relocate to Cuzco, some 500 kilometers (311 miles) away. Thousands of years later, the Incas still considered Tiwanaku the place from whence Manco Capac, the mythical founder of their race, began his conquering march throughout the Andes.

At the Gates of Cuzco

According to the great French antiquarian Francis de Castelnau, Manco Capac "was certainly the descendant of one of the great kings of Tiwanaku, Huyustus." Playing a similar role to the one attributed to Viracocha in other legends, "It was him who restored the old ways and costumes of his people, which had been lost at the time of the Deluge and in the long dark ages that followed."[47] Such is confirmed by the chronicle of Fernando de Montesinos, who speaks of an antediluvian dynasty of kings of Tiwanaku, followed by two postdiluvian dynasties of kings of Tampu Tocco and Cuzco.[48]

According to the Spanish conquistador Cieza de León, "The first Incas thought of establishing their court at Tiahuanaco."[49] Over time, however, Cuzco was favored due to its milder climate and more easily defensible location.

Like Tiwanaku, Cuzco was then already a very ancient city. The center of Atlantean Cuzco was quite possibly located on the hill of Sacsayhuaman (see Plate 33), but this city, too, was entirely destroyed in the terrestrial upheaval

of 10,961 BCE. The neo-Atlantean city and the later Inca capital occupied instead the valley between the rivers Tullumayu and Huatanay. It was a city of low granite buildings, designed to withstand even the strongest earthquakes. The structures of the early neo-Atlantean period in Cuzco, like the buildings of Tiwanaku, consisted of large ashlars held together by metal clamps (see Plate 34). No mortar was used to seal the joints; instead, they were thermally treated by a process that left a glossy, vitrified patina on the surface of the stone.[50] Later structures contained a mix of construction techniques, mostly in the cyclopean, or polygonal, style. The massive megalithic fortress of Sacsayhuaman is perhaps the finest example of this style, in which "the stones interlock at random, with the convex of one fitting into another's concave," so perfectly that each block appears to be almost molded into the next one, like pieces of a jigsaw puzzle (see Plates 35, 36, and 37).[51] Sacsayhuaman was a dwelling fit for the gods, built more to impress and to instill fear than for any other reason. Its walls rise in three rows over a length of almost 400 meters (1,312 feet). Blocks of 50 tons were placed on top of others weighing 100 to 200 tons, stacked up to a height of nearly 18 meters (59 feet). One block in the first course measures 12 meters (39 feet) wide by 8 meters (26 feet) high, weighing an estimated 360 tons.[52]

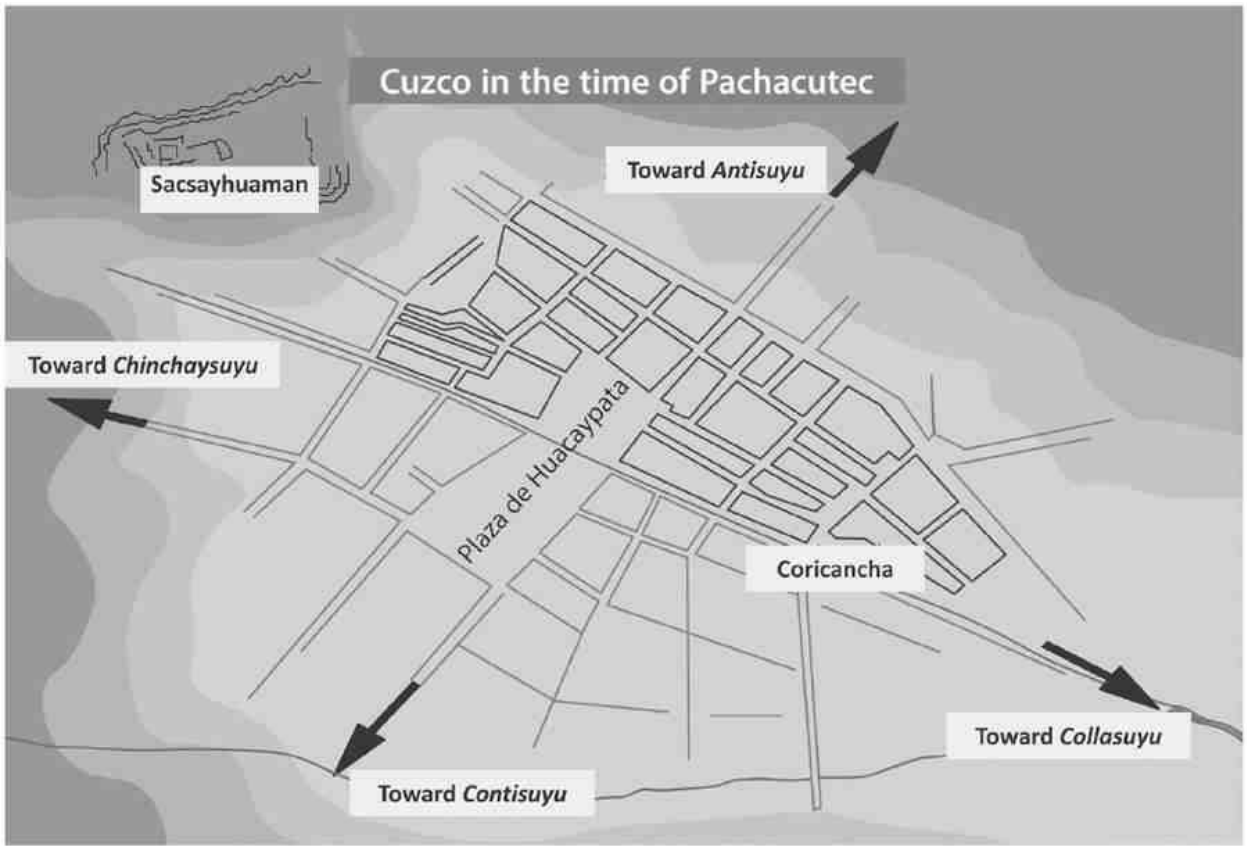

Figure 10.8. Plan of the city of Cuzco in the Inca period (after Tavera Vega, 2020).

Peruvian scholar Alfredo Gamarra has identified in the ruins of Cuzco at least three different epochs of construction, characterized by different styles of masonry. The Hanan Pacha style, the earliest of the three, is purely monolithic and may be considered the expression of a creative power that could shape and modify stone with the same facility with which we would mold clay. The second style, called Huran Pacha, is what we may truly call neo-Atlantean, characterized by the use of large blocks of stone in either the "coursed" or polygonal manners. Finally, the Ukun Pacha style is the simplest of the three and the one most commonly used in the post-Atlantean and the later Inca periods, consisting of much smaller stones loosely jointed together with or without cement.[53]

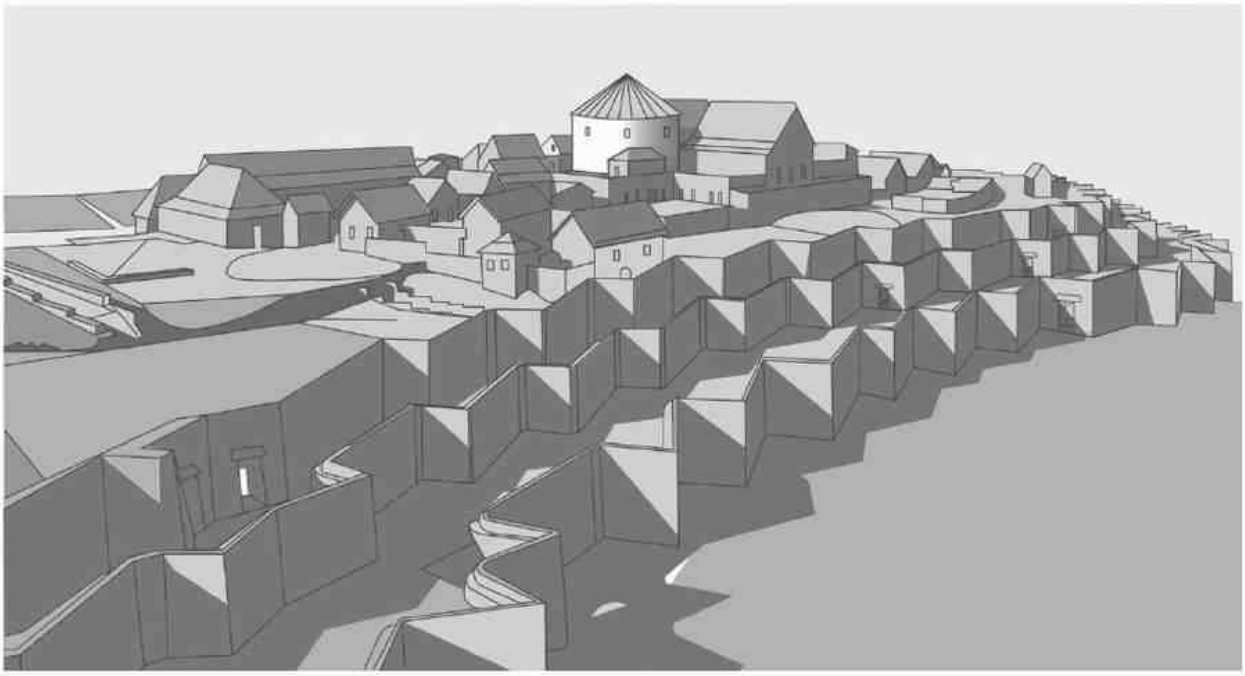

Figure 10.9. Reconstruction of the fortress of Sacsayhuaman, near Cuzco (after Mar and Caballero, 2015).

Citadels of Eternity

Outside of Cuzco, examples of all three architectural styles can be found in the many fortified sites dating from the neo-Atlantean to the Inca periods that once guarded the Sacred Valley of the Urubamba River, such as at Machu Picchu (see Plates 38 and 39).

Machu Picchu is perhaps the most famous of these "citadels of eternity." One of its most emblematic structures, El Torreón (see Plate 40), may have been constructed in the period from 3000 to 2500 BCE.[54] Yet the foundation of Machu Picchu could date back even further, if this city was, in fact, the same as the legendary Tampu Tocco. That city was built, according to Montesinos, by a group of postdiluvian sages called Amautas 2,950 years after the Great Flood.[55] It was there that the ancestors of the Incas took refuge when their land was overrun by savage tribes that came from east and south of the Andes.[56]

Other even mightier fortresses were built at Pisac, at the entrance of the Sacred Valley, and Ollantaytambo. At Pisac, the site's natural defenses were greatly enhanced through the construction of massive megalithic stone walls

and fortified gates and towers, seamlessly emerging from the living rock (see Plate 41). At Ollantaytambo, perfect polygonal walls hang perilously from the edge of a cliff, 200 meters (656 feet) above the valley floor (see Plate 42). On the uppermost terrace, a row of six enormous monoliths, each weighing over 70 tons, served as the foundation of some gigantic unfinished construction (see Plates 43 and 44). Nowhere else is the contrast between two entirely different civilizations and modes of construction as evident as at Ollantaytambo, where the crude walls of the Inca period stand side by side with the megalithic relics of a bygone age.

The same evidence of the reuse and appropriation of earlier sites by the Incas can be found at Wari, near Ayacucho, at Pikillaqta, Huánuco Pampa, Huaytara, Sillustani, Cutimbo, Chincheros, Ingapirca, Vilcashuaman, Samaipata and many other sites ranging from Bolivia to Ecuador.

The original megalithic builders of Peru must have been also excellent agronomists, for it was in this region that the potato and a variety of other high-altitude crops were first domesticated between eight thousand and ten thousand years ago. At Moray, a large amphitheater was dug in concentric circles to a depth of nearly 150 meters (492 feet) for the acclimatization of crops to different altitudes. As Squier observed in 1877, “This is not a region for nurturing or sustaining a large population.”[57] Severe frosts can occur at altitudes above 2,200 meters (7,217 feet) in the Andes, which can cause serious damage to most frost-sensitive crops such as maize. Yet incredibly, agricultural terraces can be found at altitudes even greater than 4,250 meters (13,943 feet) above sea level in the region of Cuzco and Lake Titicaca, often reaching up to the very top of steep mountain peaks, well above the limits of modern cultivations. Paradoxically, these are also often found to be the oldest portions of the terraces. Only by assuming that the entire Andean altiplano was upheaved by as much as 3,000 to 4,000 meters (9,843 to 13,123 feet) at the time of the last terrestrial cataclysm can we explain this apparent contradiction.

The people who settled at such extreme high altitudes may have done so to escape even greater devastation in the Amazonian lowlands. Indeed, there is evidence that the origins of Andean civilization must be found in those lands that now lie east of the Andes toward the Amazon.

The Amazonian Empire

A firm believer in the existence of one or more ancient advanced civilizations in the Amazon, the famous British colonel Percy H. Fawcett dedicated much of his life to the search for what he believed was the cradle of American civilization, until his mysterious disappearance in 1925. Inca traditions spoke of a mysterious kingdom to the east called Paititi, possessing great wealth and buildings like those of Cuzco. Fawcett himself had heard stories from the Indians of great cities of stone inhabited by men of a white race, very advanced in the arts of a civilization, in the region of the upper Xingu River.[58] "The existence of these cities I could not doubt for a moment," he wrote in his diary, adding that "the answer to the enigma of Ancient South America—and perhaps of the prehistoric world—may be found when these old cities are located and opened up to scientific research."[59]

One such city was likely discovered in 1753 by a Portuguese expedition from Bahia, whose account is preserved in the famous Manuscript 512 of the National Library of Rio de Janeiro. The fruitless search for another lost city called Manoa, near the border with Venezuela, was described by the French professor Marcel Homet in his 1963 book *The Sons of the Sun.* According to the *Chronicle of Akakor* by German journalist Karl Brugger, Manoa was one of thirty stone cities that formed part of the empire of the Ugha Mongulala. In his book, which Brugger claimed to be a faithful transcript of conversations he had with the self-proclaimed Indian chief Tatunca Nara, he called Akakor the capital of this sprawling Amazonian empire, which existed as much as twelve thousand years ago in the mountains between Brazil, Peru, and Venezuela.[*29] Until now, however, very little evidence has emerged to confirm or disprove these theories.

If one thing is certain, it is that the Amazon jungle was not always the "green hell" that we know today. Recent discoveries have demonstrated that the Amazonian lowlands were once home to a large population. In the same approximate area where Fawcett disappeared in 1925, Professor Michael Heckenberger discovered a vast network of raised causeways, canals, and enormous ditched enclosures that may have been home to tens of thousands of people.[60] For decades before these discoveries, scientists had struggled to find an explanation for the so-called terra preta, a thick organic layer believed to account for nearly 10 percent of all Amazonian soils, consisting largely of burned charcoal, kitchen residues, and small ceramic shards. It is now

believed that these highly fertile and nutrientrich soils, which cover an area almost double that of Great Britain, were created by ancient communities to sustain large-scale agriculture in the otherwise infertile Amazon.[61]

Even though the vestiges of great stone cities like the ones imagined by Fawcett and other explorers have so far eluded archaeological discovery, important information on this lost Amazonian empire can be gathered from esoteric sources. Alice Bailey, Timothy Paterson, Godfré Ray King, and George Hunt Williamson all speak of ancient South America as a remnant of Lemuria or a colony of imperial Atlantis, suggesting that many relics from this remote age may still be found in the forests of Brazil and Peru.

It was the terrible natural convulsions of the end of the last ice age that, quite possibly, caused the sinking of the entire eastern portion of South America and the elevation of the Andes. The survivors took refuge in the Andean highlands, where they gave rise to the great megalithic civilizations of Peru and Bolivia. There we also find legends of a mysterious underground world of subterranean cities and tunnels where the knowledge of Atlantis and other lost civilizations is said to be still guarded by the representatives of various esoteric and mystery schools— the survivors of the great cataclysm.

THE NEW ATLANTEAN EMPIRES IN THE EAST

Ancient South America is certainly not the only place where the seeds of neo-Atlantean civilization may have been preserved, guarded by secret communities, down to the present day. Such antediluvian communities are also said to exist in India and among the deep valleys and snowy peaks of the Himalayas. It is there, in the very heart of Asia, that the fate of neoAtlantean civilization overlaps with that of the last remnants of the Aryan Empire—and of the even more mysterious civilizations of Rama and Mu.

The Rama Empire

The Rig-Veda, the oldest of the Hindu Vedas, speaks of a great flood from which only seven sages were saved in an ark that landed on the mountains of the Himalaya. This group of sages, known as the Saptarishi, or the “Seven

Rishis," was responsible for preserving the "word" of the Vedas through the Flood and for repromulgating it to postdiluvian humanity. "The Vedas," writes Graham Hancock, "depict the Saptarishi as a lineage of ascetics. After the Flood, their primary abode was the Himalayas, where they would retreat to meditate and perform austerities, but they also played decisive roles in running and recording secular affairs and in the making and guidance of kings."[62]

It is certainly tempting to connect this legend to the many others that circulate throughout Central Asia concerning an underground kingdom in the Himalayas still inhabited by the last descendants of the antediluvian sages. It was under the guidance of these enlightened beings that the ancestors of the Aryans moved into India from a land that, according to the renowned Sanskrit scholar Bal Gangadhar Tilak, must have been located north of the Himalayas, in the area now occupied by the Gobi Desert.[63]

The evidence from various submerged cities discovered off the coast of India and in the Gulf of Cambay shows that these Aryan survivors from north of the Himalayan plateau did, in fact, succeed at rebuilding a sophisticated civilization in the Indian subcontinent. In 2001, a piece of wood from ruins located at a depth of 36 meters (118 feet) in the Gulf of Cambay was dated to 11,500 years BCE.[64] If confirmed, this discovery would push back the origins of the Indus valley civilization by nearly 4,500 years. More underwater discoveries were made in the first years of the twenty-first century at Dwarka, off the coast of Gujarat, and in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu, at Poompuhur and Mahabalipuram, as described by Hancock in his 2002 book *Underworld.*

The same civilization that built the now submerged ruins off the coast of Gujarat and in the Gulf of Cambay may have also been responsible for the many mysterious megalithic ruins and cave temples that can be found throughout the Indian subcontinent, from Ajanta and Ellora to Elephanta, Barabar, Vijayanagara, and Konarak.

This civilization would have existed around the end of the last ice age, making it the direct successor of the antediluvian Aryan empire referenced in esoteric traditions—contemporary yet separate from the neo-Atlantean empires of postdiluvian Egypt and South America. An account of the events of this period may have influenced the composition of the two national Indian epics of the Mahabharata and the Ramayana. Whereas the Ramayana deals

with the war of Devas and Asuras, the context of the Mahabharata is that of the subsequent war fought between two Aryan dynasties, the Kauravas and the Pandavas, over the throne of Hastinapura. The Mahabharata ends with the victory of the Pandavas, yet at the cost of the complete destruction of Kaurava society, an event that in the Vedic system also marked the beginning of the Kali Yuga.

The Colonies of Mu

Ancient China would have been, like India, one of the great centers of Aryan civilization, as this spread from its Gobi center to the rest of Asia during the Second Atlantean and neo-Atlantean periods. Even in these Eastern lands, however, the Atlantean influence is evident in the symbolism of the mountain temple, of which some very late examples can still be found among the monuments of Cambodia, Thailand, Indonesia, and Myanmar (see Plate 45).

Extensive megalithic ruins exist in various parts of China, Korea, Laos, and Japan. In China alone, there are possibly hundreds of ancient pyramids and pyramid-shaped hills, some larger than the Great Pyramid of Egypt. An enormous unfinished monolith in the Yangshan quarry, near Nanjing, is believed to weigh 16,250 tons and is part of one gigantic stela that, if completed, would have weighed over 30,000 tons.[65]

Twelve thousand years ago, Malaysia and Indonesia were joined in a single continental landmass roughly the size of Europe, called Sundaland. Geologist Danny Natawidjaja believes that Sundaland was once home to an advanced Ice Age civilization. In 2010, Natawidjaja began excavating a megalithic site in western Java called Gunung Padang. The excavations uncovered a massive artificial pyramid 95 meters (312 feet) high and 150 meters (492 feet) wide, formed of huge blocks of prismatic basalt. Preliminary dating shows that the site may be 11,000 and possibly up to 28,000 years old, which would make Gunung Padang the oldest pyramid on Earth.[66]

Mysterious megalithic remains also exist on several of the Pacific Islands —on Nan Madol, Kosrae, Tonga, Tahiti, Rapa Iti, Tinian, and Easter Island, where James Churchward situated his lost continent of Mu. According to Churchward, Mu was once a vast Pacific continent that extended from Hawaii in the north to Easter Island in the south. It was home to an advanced

race called the Naacal, which influenced all the ancient cultures of India and China before the arrival of the Aryans. Its civilization was neither Aryan nor neo-Atlantean, and it may have been, in fact, a remnant of antediluvian lands that sank in the Pacific Ocean long before Atlantis even existed.

THE DOWNFALL OF A MASTERFUL PEOPLE

Despite these incredible accomplishments, by 8500 BCE, less than two thousand years after the beginning of its ambitious program of global reconstruction, the new Atlantean Empire lay in ruins. Its great cities sat largely depopulated and threatened by the raging seas. Its armies disbanded. The few shaken survivors, persecuted and forced to retreat to solitary, inhospitable fortresses. The gifts of antediluvian science and technology were all but forgotten, rusting away in the middle of dense forests or in faraway deserts. *What had happened?*

Many factors seemingly contributed to the downfall of neo-Atlantean civilization. These included widespread climate change and desertification, a dramatic rise in global sea levels, mass migrations across the Sahara and central Asia, armed conflict, cultural regression, and the depletion of natural resources.

Starting about 9600 BCE, rising sea levels forced the survivors to abandon the fertile coastal plains and cities and relocate to higher ground, where conditions for agriculture were less favorable. At the same time, the climate became more extreme and less predictable, with catastrophic floods followed by long periods of drought. Competition for the few available resources intensified. As a result, social imbalances grew, as did also the number of people employed in the colossal construction projects of the neo-Atlantean period. Revolts, which erupted everywhere, were increasingly difficult to control by a dwindling elite whose technological advantage was also quickly disappearing. Massive inflows of refugees, displaced by rising sea levels, desertification, and tribal warfare, certainly added to the internal pressures by accelerating the depletion of food stocks. The countryside became infested with nomadic herders and hunter-gatherers who had become raiders by necessity, disrupting trade networks and communications between

cities. With the countryside thus laid waste and the collapse of centralized power and authority, nobody was left to repair or maintain the great network of canals and waterways that had for centuries ensured the abundant agricultural surplus on which neo-Atlantean civilization was sustained. Technology failed, as even the last remnants of the Atlantean industrial complex disappeared beneath the waves. Without repair parts or suitable energy sources to power them, machines were scrapped to salvage whatever valuable materials they contained or left to rust in the fields. Military conflict erupted along the eastern borders of the neo-Atlantean Empire against the forces of Rama and a reconstituted Aryan Empire. Entire libraries containing the history and science of the antediluvian world were lost to the raging fires or to the rising waters.

Each one of these factors alone would be enough to explain the collapse of neo-Atlantean civilization. Yet certain elements suggest that the collapse was also extraordinarily swift. The evidence from unfinished construction projects around the world speaks of sudden abandonment, as if some vital connection had been suddenly severed by an invisible cataclysm. At Tiwanaku, Ollantaytambo, Baalbek, and Giza, the impression is that the ancient builders simply dropped their tools and left, leaving only the shells of their unfinished structures behind.

An Invisible Cataclysm

About 11,600 years ago, the Younger Dryas, which had kept the world in the grip of a new ice age for the previous 1,300 years, abruptly came to an end. In a matter of years, the average air temperatures in the North Atlantic rose by at least 7°C to 8°C (12.8°F to 14.4°F), and up to 10°C to 12°C (18°F to 21.6°F) in places. Precipitations over Greenland doubled in a matter of months as water surface temperatures in the Norwegian Sea rose by 5°C (9°F) in less than forty years, accompanied by a rapid retreat of sea-ice cover.[67] We do not know whether this unprecedented rate of climate change was limited to the North Atlantic, where the majority of the ice core samples that were analyzed originated, or whether it was truly a global phenomenon. What is certain is that no gradualist model seems capable of explaining the suddenness of the changes observed at the termination of the Younger Dryas. Some truly catastrophic event must have been responsible, which Hancock believes was almost certainly a second encounter with the same disintegrating

comet that also triggered the beginning of the Younger Dryas some 1,300 years earlier. This second occasion, however, had the opposite effects. As we recall, Hancock writes, “Analysis suggests that the primary impacts were not on land or onto ice, but into the world’s oceans . . . throwing up vast plumes of water vapor and creating a greenhouse effect that caused global warming rather than global cooling.”[68]

This second impact in 9600 BCE, moreover, may have been responsible for the final sinking of the last surviving portions of Atlantis still above water and the reactivation of oceanic circulation in the North Atlantic. With the sinking of the Mid-Atlantic Ridge, which had until then acted as a barrier preventing the southern currents from reaching the polar regions, the warm equatorial current again moved northward, carrying warmth to the icebound shores of Europe. The climate rapidly grew warmer, and the ice cover melted or retreated. The Ice Age ended.[69]

The end of the Younger Dryas also coincided with a dramatic rise in global sea levels, which was itself a direct consequence of the melting of the North Atlantic and European ice caps. Between seven thousand and seventeen thousand years ago, global sea levels increased by an estimated 120 meters (394 feet), at a rate of nearly 1 meter (3.3 feet) per century. It has been calculated that nearly 15 percent of the Earth’s overall land area, equivalent to nearly 25 million square kilometers (9.7 million square miles), may have been submerged since the end of the last ice age. “This,” observes Hancock, “is roughly equivalent to the combined areas of the United States and the whole of South America. It is an area almost three times as large as Canada and much larger than China and Europe combined.”[70] These lands, moreover, would have been among the best and most fertile in the world. Vast coastal plains, large river basins, temperate lowland forests—everything was submerged within the span of just a few generations.

The consequences of this 120-meter (394 feet) rise in global sea levels would have been particularly severe for any coastal maritime civilization. Indeed, as Hancock suggests, “It would have either demolished or covered up with millennial deposits of silt and muck all evidence of their former existence. . . . If the waves rose slowly, such hypothetical cities would have been pounded for centuries in the high-energy intertidal zone which makes short work even of granite structures. But if the sea level rise was due to some cataclysmic surge, then walls of water would have borne down and

crushed beyond recognition much that stood in their path."[71]

Countless cities, the fruit of the work of many generations, would have been submerged by the rising waters. Enormous energies and resources would have been then spent in an effort to rebuild what the sea had taken.

Certainly, the first coastal settlements would have been built after the manner of the earlier Atlantean cities, with great palaces, public squares, gardens, docks, and wharves. The countryside around the cities would have been similarly extensively cultivated, with the digging of canals and artificial water basins for irrigation. Yet all these efforts would have been made useless by rising sea levels. As writes Italian admiral and engineer Flavio Barbiero, "At first they may have tried to put up a last, desperate defense against the sea, building dikes and embankments. But it was all in vain: they had to abandon everything to the rising seas and move to higher ground, beginning all over again, and so on, every so many decades."[72]

Rising sea levels would have forced mass migrations of peoples toward the interior of the continents, creating ever fiercer competition for land and resources. This happened, moreover, at a time when desertification of a formerly green Sahara was pushing entire populations to migrate toward the Mediterranean seaboard and the Nile valley.

Only the final sinking of Atlantis, likely the consequence of a second comet impact around 9,600 BCE, could explain the full range of climate change that characterized the end of the Younger Dryas. Yet paradoxically, the same event that caused the collapse of the neo-Atlantean civilization in Egypt and the Mediterranean also favored the return of milder climate conditions in the north, thus opening up vast territories to human colonization for the first time since the beginning of the Ice Age. Among them may have been some of the last Atlantean lands still above water, the classical islands of Thule, Scheria, and Tartessos.

Ultima Thule

The memory of the last Atlantean islands survived well into the classical age and made its way into the Homeric myths and the works of various ancient geographers.

The island of Scheria, home of the legendary Phaeacians, may have still

existed above water as late as the European Bronze Age. The description that Homer gives of the island itself is highly reminiscent of Atlantis, including a large harbor and a temple of Poseidon. Scheria's climate, however, evokes the picture of a northern sea, described as "misty" and "wine-dark." Its name has no meaning in Greek but could be related to the Old Norse *sker*, indicating a rocky or craggy island. It is not known when or where Scheria existed, except that it was situated in the North Atlantic, at a distance of eighteen day's sail from the nearest island of Ogygia. Scheria itself may have been located in the immediate vicinity of yet another classical island, Thule.

It is quite possible that Thule, like Scheria, formed part of a "Northern Atlantis" landmass, located in the region of the now submerged Porcupine Bank and Rockall Plateau. The island of Thule was sacred to Apollo and possessed a great and wonderful circular temple of the sun. Despite its northern location, said to be six days' sail north of Britain, near the "frozen sea," Thule enjoyed a mild climate, which ensured an abundance of crops and fruits. This may have been a consequence of the island's lying in the middle of a warm oceanic current at a time when this part of the Mid-Atlantic Ridge was still subaerial.

Far more numerous accounts have survived of the Atlantean island of Tartessos, which existed in front of Spain, immediately outside the Pillars of Hercules. It is mentioned on a stela of the Assyrian king Esarhaddon (681–669 BCE), and its name figures at least eighteen times in the Bible. A king of Tartessos called Arganthonios was said by Herodotus to have welcomed a Greek expedition from Phocaea in the sixth century BCE.[73] In the fourth century BCE, the Greek historian Ephorus of Kyme would describe Tartessos as a major trading center, located two days' sail from the Pillars of Hercules. This would situate the island in a region of submerged seamounts 300 kilometers (186 miles) west of Gibraltar. Tartessos itself may be identical with one of the ten kingdoms that formed part of Plato's Atlantis, that of Gadeiros, which evidently included a region either containing or facing the city of Cadiz (the ancient Gades), in southern Spain. Interestingly, an island called Gadeiros appears in front of the Pillars of Hercules in the 1467 Ptolemaic Atlas of Nicolaus Germanus, in a place where no such island presently exists.

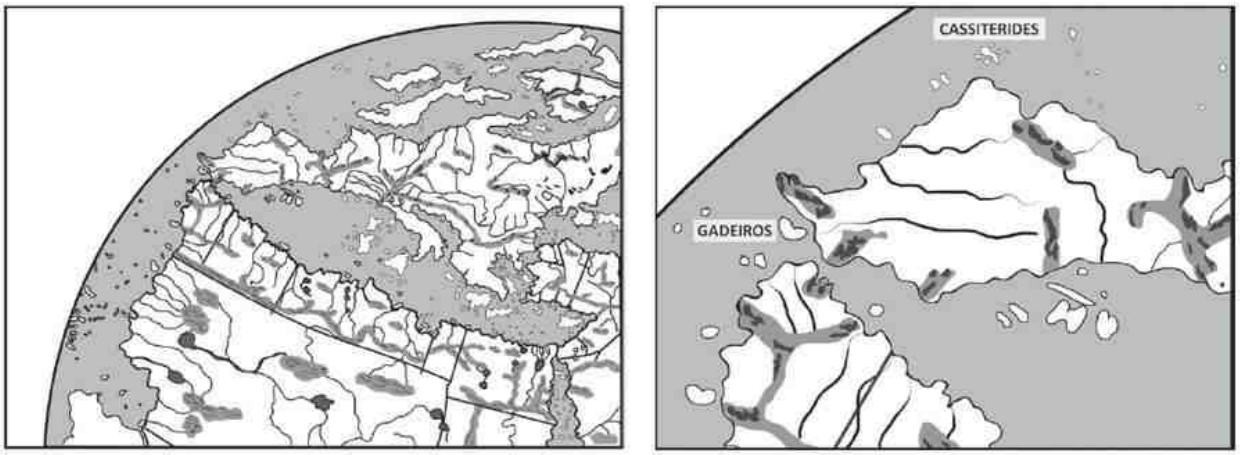

Figure 10.10. The Ptolemaic Atlas of Nicolaus Germanus of 1467 (left), with a detail (right) showing the large island of Gadeiros outside of the Pillars of Hercules. Warsaw National Library.

A Tartessian presence in southern Spain has been claimed, among others, by the British archaeologist Ellen M. Whishaw, citing as evidence various sections of cyclopean walls, hydraulic tunnels, and aqueducts discovered near the city of Niebla.[74] Cancho Roano, another ancient temple in the shape of a step pyramid and surrounded by a moat, dating to the sixth century BCE, has been described as a "memorial city" built in the image of Atlantis.[75] Other supposedly Tartessian artifacts, such as the famous bust of the Lady of Elche and the Treasure of El Carambolo, while probably no older than the eighth century BCE, testify nevertheless to the survival of an artistic tradition of possible Atlantean origin from very remote antiquity. Indeed, according to Strabo, the Turdetanians, a people inhabiting southern Spain during Roman times and considered by many as the true heirs of the kingdom of Tartessos, still possessed "records of their ancient history, poems and laws written in verses that are six thousand years old."[76]

Tartessos may have sunk later than any other Atlantean land, perhaps as late as the fourth century BCE. According to Zhirov, "The route from Atlantis to Europe passed through the island of Tartessos, and the town of Tartessos was the capital of the new kingdom."[77] From this viewpoint, Tartessos may be considered the true and most direct successor of Atlantis during the post-Atlantean period.

When the last Atlantean islands too sank beneath the waves, their sinking triggered a huge migration of peoples toward the coasts of Europe and the Mediterranean. This was the time of the Atlantean diaspora and the mysterious Sea Peoples invasions, which will be the focus of the next chapters.

PART V

THE MEGALITHIC ODYSSEY

11

THE ATLANTEAN DIASPORA

The fall of Hierakonpolis left a power vacuum that neither the rulers of Thule or Tartessos nor any of the other remaining neo-Atlantean potentates could fill. One by one, the light of even the last centers of neoAtlantean civilization was extinguished. Only in those regions that were more naturally protected and isolated, on the North Atlantic islands and in the Andes of South America, did some sparkles of neo-Atlantean civilization survive the generalized collapse, albeit in a much decayed and diminished form. In a similar way, the masters of the Aryan race established their abode among the inaccessible peaks of the Himalayas and retreated from ordinary human affairs. The world entered a period of obscurity as the sages refused to reconstitute the Atlantean Empire, preferring instead to guide the course of human civilization from behind the scenes.

During the post-Atlantean period, after the collapse of the great political and administrative centers of the neo-Atlantean civilization, a significant defensive concern emerged, typical of times of crisis, which prompted the construction of massive cyclopean fortresses. The sinking of even the last islands of Atlantis sent wave after wave of Sea Peoples to the coasts of Europe and Africa, giving rise to distinctive megalithic cultures. The postAtlantean Pelasgians remained a powerful force in the eastern and western Mediterranean through at least the second millennium BCE, when a new wave of Sea Peoples invasions and the arrival of Aryan populations from

the steppes brought their civilization to an end. During this long period of time, much of the knowledge of the earlier antediluvian and neo-Atlantean period was lost. Both Atlantean and Aryan peoples descended into barbarism, and the flame of civilization was nearly extinguished. What was not destroyed by wars or natural catastrophes was deliberately concealed, lest it be used to reconstitute another Atlantean empire. The post-Atlantean period and the time of the Atlantean diaspora had begun.

THE LAST ATLANTEANS

Beginning in about 9600 BCE, climate change started forcing large movements of peoples from the rapidly desertifying regions of North Africa and the southern Levant toward western Anatolia and northern Mesopotamia. The scattering of neo-Atlantean populations through the Near East seems to be the only plausible explanation for the sudden emergence of agriculture and a sophisticated lithic technology in places like Göbekli Tepe, Jericho, and Çatal Höyük.

In order to survive, these people would have had to abandon much of their advanced scientific knowledge and evolve into a different type of culture—a shamanistic elite, perhaps, that would come to dominate the spiritual and intellectual life of large areas of the Levant and the Near East for thousands of years to follow.

Between 9000 and 8000 BCE, the inhabitants of the region between Kurdistan and the Fertile Crescent of Iraq and Syria went through what Andrew Collins called “an unexplained stage of accelerated technological evolution.”[1] This seems to have been the result of the arrival of a foreign elite possessing an extensive knowledge of agriculture, architecture, and astronomy, as well as a wholly new set of religious and spiritual beliefs.

In the long run, however, and despite the initial flourishing of centers like Göbekli Tepe, this elite was unable to preserve much of their scientific and technological capabilities. It could be, as Collins suggests, that they possessed “too much mental sophistication and not enough practical capability or manpower” to rebuild the same type of high culture that existed in Egypt and the southern Levant during the neo-Atlantean period.[2]

With the beginning of the European Bronze Age, any technological

advantage that the Atlantean survivors may have had over the neighboring populations quickly disappeared. Throughout Europe and the Near East, the new militaristic and patriarchal order of the Semitic and Indo-European conquerors violently replaced the priestly and shamanistic societies of the post-Atlantean period. They lived on, however, in the memories of the Nephilim, giants, fallen angels, Túatha dé Danann, Shining Ones, Titans, Pelasgians, and Asuras of myth.

UNCERTAIN FORCES

Göbekli Tepe is the site that more than any other has revolutionized our view of prehistory in the last few decades. Eleven thousand years ago, the people of Göbekli Tepe were able to cut and raise enormous pillars of stone, some of which weighed up to 20 tons (see Plates 1 and 2). They possessed an advanced mathematical knowledge, as reflected in the complex system of proportions that characterize each enclosure, as well as an intuitive understanding of the mechanics of precession.

There is no known precedent for the sophisticated megalithic technology displayed at Göbekli Tepe. In fact, the earliest rings are also the largest and most sophisticated, both technically and artistically. As we observed before, it is as if the people of Göbekli Tepe got steadily worse at temple building over time. In the words of Charles C. Mann, “Göbekli Tepe was all fall and no rise,” until, finally, construction stopped altogether by 8200 BCE.[3]

If Göbekli Tepe was the work of a shamanistic elite that moved into Anatolia at the end of the Younger Dryas and traded technology with the local hunter-gatherers, what happened to them and why did they leave? It may be that some never left, but remained settled in southern and eastern Anatolia, eventually giving rise to the sophisticated Neolithic culture of Çatal Höyük some two thousand years later. Others might have migrated farther east into the Caucasus, south and west into Mesopotamia and Anatolia.[4]

By 8500 BCE, we find them settled in Iraqi Kurdistan, where traces of a shamanistic cult centered on the vulture, like that of Göbekli Tepe, have been found at the Shanidar Cave. Around the same time, an unknown culture was responsible for the construction of the first monumental structures at Jericho, in central Palestine, which included a massive 8.5-meterhigh (28 foot) stone

tower and a 600-meter-long (1,969 foot) city wall surrounded by a ditch cut through the solid bedrock. Another Neolithic settlement, at Ain Ghazal, dating to 7250 BCE, may have housed a population of over three thousand people and extended over an area of 10 to 15 hectares. The Neolithic dwellings of Ain Ghazal were not simple huts, but robust structures with plastered walls and floors, and they were arranged along a grid-like pattern.

Interestingly, genetic evidence confirms the presence at Ain Ghazal of at least two different ethnic groups: one local, the other from Anatolia.[5] It is also in Anatolia, at Çayönü, that we find the first examples of urban planning and terrazzo-style lime cement floors, a technique that would be again employed by the Romans almost seven thousand years later.[6]

The following three thousand years would then see the same "uncertain forces" at work behind the rise of civilization in Kurdistan, Elam, and Sumer, with the emergence of the Jarmo and Ubaid cultures. The art of the Ubaid period is itself rich in representations of individuals with peculiar physical characteristics, including large, elongated heads and bulgy, beading eyes.

The same style of figurines is found among the Vinça people of the Danube Valley, perhaps signaling an early migration of peoples from Anatolia into today's Romania and Bulgaria. In addition to these people's knowledge of agriculture and metalworking, this is further suggested by the presence among the Vinça of a system of writing comparable to protocuneiform and early Sumerian.[7]

It is quite possible that the art of the Vinça and Ubaid periods signaled the appearance among these two cultures of a foreign elite with unusual physical characteristics that evoked in many ways literary descriptions of the biblical Watchers and Nephilim. As Collins puts it, one would almost be tempted to picture the arrival of "extremely tall, ivory-skinned individuals with snow-white hair . . . long, viper-like faces, high cheek-bones and strange slit-like eyes that would be enough to instill fear among any who witnessed their approach."[8]

These individuals would be remembered as either angelic or demonic beings by later generations. Their origins may be traced among the survivors of the same "elder culture" that from Egypt spread to areas of the Levant and southeastern Anatolia after the end of the Younger Dryas.

In Malta and the central Mediterranean, other mysterious monuments

bear evidence of another migration from neo-Atlantean Egypt and the Levant, not by land but by sea.

THE TEMPLES OF THE HYPOGEUM

Until the discovery of Göbekli Tepe, the prehistoric temples of Malta were considered some of the oldest freestanding megalithic structures on Earth. New evidence shows that at least some portions of the temples may date back to the same remote age as Göbekli Tepe.

The Maltese archipelago, located between Sicily and Tunisia in the central Mediterranean Sea, is home to one of the largest concentrations of megalithic monuments anywhere in the world. At least sixty temples are known on the small islands of Malta and Gozo alone. For their construction, enormous blocks of stone were employed, weighing as much as 50 tons (see Plate 46). Like the earliest enclosures of Göbekli Tepe, the interior chambers of these Maltese temples are elliptical in shape. Furthermore, there is evidence that these chambers may have been roofed with a very early form of corbelled vaulting. Various types of subterranean structures called hypogea also exist on the islands, of which the most famous is the Hypogeum of Ħal Saflieni, near the capital Valletta, consisting of a network of underground chambers on different levels that is believed to imitate the architecture of the megalithic temples aboveground.

The age of the Maltese temples has long remained an enigma; that is, until 2018, when Dutch researcher Lenie Reedijk was able to demonstrate that the Maltese temples were aligned to the rising and setting of the star Sirius in the period from 9150 to 4250 BCE.[9] This revolutionary finding would make the earliest examples of megalithic architecture on Malta virtually contemporaneous with the flourishing of Göbekli Tepe in southeastern Turkey.

Interestingly, there is also evidence that the earliest inhabitants of the Maltese islands were a markedly dolichocephalic people who probably reached Malta by sea at the end of the last ice age.[10] It was perhaps the insular nature of this civilization that allowed it to survive for thousands of years more than its counterparts in the East. Some remnants of this culture may have survived until approximately 2200 BCE, when a massive tsunami

hit the Maltese islands, causing widespread destruction along the coasts and in the interior.[11]

This may have been but the last in a long series of catastrophes brought about by rising sea levels and inundations in the central Mediterranean. As late as 1606, the ruins of a large submerged temple, built of “rectangular blocks of unbelievable size,” could still be observed in the shallow waters in front of Valletta’s Grand Harbor.[12] In 1999 a group of submerged ruins was discovered about 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) off the coast of St Julian’s at a depth of 19 meters (62 feet). Then in 2015 another submerged monolith measuring nearly 12 meters (39 feet) long was discovered at the bottom of the Channel of Sicily, in waters 40 meters (131 feet) deep, on what ten thousand years ago would have certainly been an island.[13]

These submerged structures may date to a time when Malta was still connected to the Italian mainland by means of a land bridge, and they may have been a product of the same neo-Atlantean diaspora that triggered an agricultural revolution in the Near East and Anatolia.

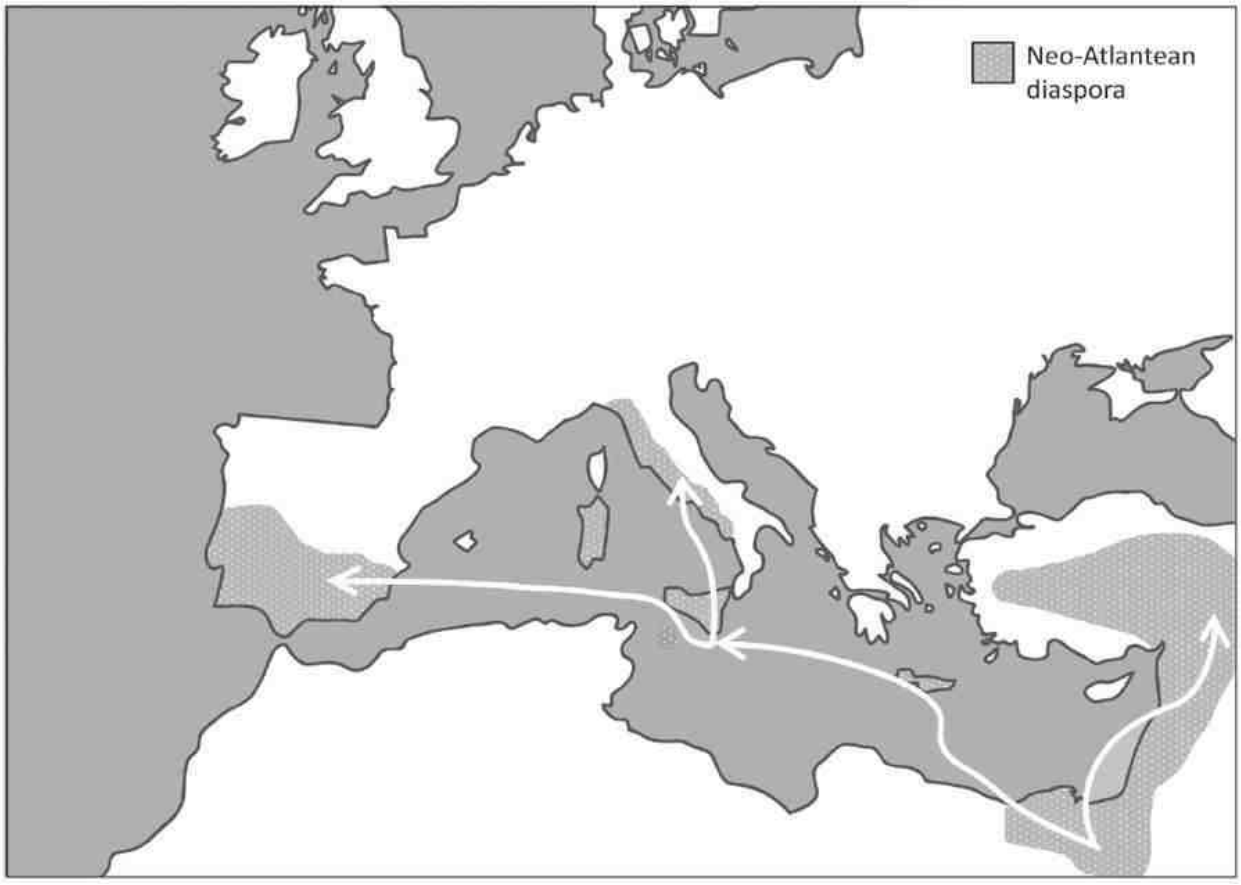

Figure 11.1. Neo-Atlantean diaspora and extent of post-Atlantean colonization in the Mediterranean region after 9600 BCE.

THE CHILDREN OF SATURN

The arrival of a foreign race, likely from the East, which brought with it the gifts of agriculture and civilization, may explain the origins of many curious traditions from pre-Roman Italy and Greece. According to Virgil's *Aeneid*, Saturn, the Greek Kronos, took refuge on the coasts of Latium, in Central Italy, after being expelled from Olympus by his son Jupiter. There, he gathered together the "untaught race" of the primitive inhabitants, gave them laws, taught them agriculture, and founded many cities.[14] He gave the name of Saturnia to the future city of Rome and built the cities of Alatri, Anagni, Arpino, Atina, and Antino (Ferentino).

Many other cities of this lost Saturnian colony may now lie deep beneath the Mediterranean Sea. The ruins of three different cities were described by archaeologist Costantino Cattoi in the waters in front of the ancient city of Cosa, on the coast of Tuscany. The earliest of these, Cattoi believed, disappeared under the waves over 9,500 years ago.[15] At that time, Italy possessed a far more considerable landmass, extending into the Tyrrhenian and Adriatic Seas. A vast coastal plain stretched from the west of Tuscany toward the south as far as Naples, of which the islands of the Tuscan and Pontine archipelagos, as well as the present Capes Argentario and Circeo, formed the most notable reliefs. This now submerged plain, which Cattoi called Tirrenide, would have been the seat of the first Italian civilization. The great megalithic citadels of Cosa, Pyrgi, Orbetello, and Circeii were rebuilt farther inland by survivors from this "Italian Atlantis," whose ancient cities were lost to rising sea levels at the end of the last ice age.

Throughout the Mediterranean, we find similar traditions that speak of the arrival of even more mysterious agricultural deities who are usually portrayed as exiles or survivors from a previous generation of gods. In the Greek myth, the Telchines and the Kabiri, born of the race of the Titans, were considered to be the inventors of agriculture and the arts, the "instructors of every artificer in brass and iron."[16] They were the ones who forged such

mythical weapons as the trident of Poseidon and the *fulgur* of Zeus and were the first to raise statues to the gods and to teach men the magical arts. Their memory survived on the island of Rhodes, on Lemnos, and at Samothrace, where they were worshiped in a form of mystery cult closely associated with that of Hephaestus.

On Crete, the Curetes, Dactyls, and Korybantes, being of the same race as the giants and the Cyclopes, taught primitive man the arts of agriculture, shepherding, hunting, beekeeping, and metalworking. These children of Kronos, inhabiting the highest mountain peaks of Crete and Phrygia, were revered as mysterious sorcerers, the inventors of music and dancing and of all kinds of useful things.[17] Their descendants may have still lived on Crete in the time of the legendary king Minos.[18]

To them and to the mysterious Cyclopes was attributed the construction of such megalithic fortresses as Mycenae and Tyrins, which were therefore called Cyclopean, just as the Romans would call Saturnian the many ruins of unknown age that dotted the countryside around Rome.

In these ancient myths, we find an echo of the neo-Atlantean diaspora and of the arrival on the coasts of Europe of a race of megalithic builders possessing an advanced knowledge of agriculture, architecture, and metalworking. This race seems to have colonized at some point the whole Mediterranean area and is particularly associated with the megalithic ruins of Italy and Greece. Even so, and despite its great diffusion throughout the ancient Mediterranean, this culture was never able to rise again to the levels achieved by neo-Atlantean civilization before the cataclysm. Lacking the technology and resources to rebuild their former civilization, the survivors rapidly fell into a state of barbarism, made even worse by the many forced migrations caused by rising sea levels and the loss of precious agricultural land. Their descendants mixed with the local indigenous populations prior to the time of the Aryan invasions, forming the nucleus of our modern Mediterranean and southern European populations.

12

PEOPLES FROM THE SEA

Between the fourth and the fifth millennia BCE, a mysterious people appeared on the Atlantic coasts of Europe and the Mediterranean, triggering another phase of "accelerated evolution." This phase may have coincided with the sinking of some of the last portions of Atlantis that still remained above water, which sent a new wave of refugees across the Atlantic. After the great cataclysms of 10,961 BCE and 9600 BCE, two other major episodes of subsidence seem to have occurred in the North Atlantic, in approximately 3500 BCE and 1178 BCE. Their cause may have been yet another encounter of our planet with the tail of the same disintegrating comet responsible for the Younger Dryas cataclysm thousands of years earlier.[1] The impacts and land subsidence in the North Atlantic triggered a wave of Sea Peoples invasions of the Mediterranean and the European Atlantic Seaboard, which continued well into the Bronze Age and the second millennium BCE.

RETURN OF THE GODS

A phenomenon that has never been quite adequately explained by historians is the sudden emergence, around 3200 BCE, of the first civilizations of Egypt and Mesopotamia. These great cultures appear as if out of nowhere, already fully formed, apparently knowing no prehistory and no evolution.[2]

In Egypt, the beginning of the dynastic period was marked by a radical change in the culture and funerary customs of the elite. This was accompanied by the appearance in both Egypt and Mesopotamia of individuals of a different ethnic type from that of the indigenous Neolithic populations, characterized by a larger skeletal structure and cranial capacity. Indeed, the similarities between the artistic and cultural expressions of early dynastic Egypt and Sumer are such as to suggest that the same foreign elite was responsible for the rise of both civilizations.[3]

If a foreign people had invaded both Egypt and Mesopotamia around 3200 BCE, where did this people originate? After ruling out an eastern and southern origin, Petrie's conclusion was that "a great European confederacy," formed of "Greece, Asia Minor, Italy and Libya, all leagued together," had repeatedly invaded Lower Egypt between the fourth and second millennia BCE.[4]

According to R. A. Schwaller de Lubicz, the first of these invasions at the beginning of the dynastic period coincided with a "reconquest" of Egypt by the Shemsu-Hor. This highly civilized race reoccupied the area and partially restored the monuments of the neo-Atlantean period, giving rise to a powerful kingdom in the north of Egypt that eventually conquered and absorbed the more primitive and technologically retrograde south.[5] This occurred, according to Egyptologist Robert Temple, around the time of the Third Dynasty of the Old Kingdom, or about 2700 BCE.[6]

The First Sea Peoples

Whereas Petrie favored a European origin for his "Dynastic Race," it is far more likely that the origin of this migration should have been the same as that of all the subsequent Sea Peoples invasions that reached the coasts of Egypt in the following millennia; namely, the Atlantic Seaboard and the North Atlantic islands located beyond the Pillars of Hercules.

In support of this theory, we should consider that the tradition of boat burials associated with the earliest Egyptian dynasties can only have originated with a great seafaring culture of remote antiquity, whose origin may be found outside of the Mediterranean region.

A disassembled boat found in a pit near the Great Pyramid dating to the time of the Fourth Dynasty is now considered one of the oldest, largest, and

best-preserved seagoing vessels from antiquity. At 43.6 meters (143 feet) long by 5.9 meters (19.3 feet) wide, it was a ship designed to “ride out breakers and high seas, not to contend with the little ripples of the Nile.”[7] Nineteen more boat burials were discovered by Zaki Saad at Helwan, while Walter Emery personally excavated another six at Sakkara, all dating from between the First and Third Dynasties. Even more spectacular was the discovery in 1991 of fourteen intact boats—each 22 meters (72 feet) long—near the tomb of the Second Dynasty pharaoh Khasekhemwy at Abydos. Graffiti and depictions of large boats abound in the art of the prehistoric Naqada culture (4,400–3,000 BCE), being some of the oldest in the world. The design of these early vessels, characterized by a slender profile with a high stern and bow, is remarkably similar to that of ships used by the Sea Peoples who would invade Egypt nearly two thousand years later.

The last recorded invasion of Egypt by the Sea Peoples occurred during the reign of Pharaoh Ramses III in 1178 BCE, and it was memorialized in contemporary bas-reliefs from the temple of Medinet Habu, on the opposite bank of the Nile from Thebes. The accompanying inscriptions describe the invaders as Haunebu, an expression also found in the Pyramid Texts of the Fifth and Sixth Dynasties to indicate “all the northern lands from the ends of the earth.” In an Edfu text, Haunebu is the name given to the islands of the great water-circle, located in the far North, while another New Kingdom text refers to the Haunebu as the “foreigners from the great Ocean.”[8] An inscription from Tanis gives the names of the various tribes composing the Sea Peoples coalition. These were the Peleset, Sherden, Sheklesh, Tursha, Danuna, and Akawasha. It is indeed quite possible that these peoples would therefore have named after themselves their conquered lands of Palestine, Sardinia, Sicily, Tyrrhenia (Tuscany), and Greece (after the Danaoi and Achaeans).

It was perhaps to this great maritime coalition that Plato referred when speaking of Atlantis as “a mighty power, that unprovoked made an expedition against the whole of Europe and Asia.”[9]

We now know that it was the sinking of the last portions of Atlantis still above water that triggered this large migration of peoples from the Atlantic Seaboard to the coasts of Europe and the Mediterranean.

THE ATLANTIC MEGALITHIC CULTURE

Only centuries before the appearance of the dynastic race in Egypt and Sumer, a mysterious civilization erected thousands of megalithic stone monuments on the coasts of Europe and North Africa. A study published in 2019 by archaeologist Bettina Schulz Paulsson and based on a statistical analysis of nearly thirty-five thousand prehistoric stone monuments shows that this civilization reached Europe in at least three different waves. The first, during the fifth millennium BCE, was characterized by the construction of megalithic graves and hypogea of a type most commonly found in Brittany and on the Atlantic coast of Spain. A second wave reached northern France, Spain, Scotland, and Ireland in about 3500 BCE, followed by yet a third wave in 3000 BCE. According to Schulz Paulsson, for these ideas to have traveled so fast across such a vast area as the British Isles, the northern Atlantic Seaboard, and the western Mediterranean, the megalithic builders must have necessarily relied on a sophisticated maritime technology.[10]

Prior to the advent of radiocarbon dating, the general consensus among prehistorians was that the art of megalithic building had spread to Western Europe from the Mediterranean region. This view has now, however, been amply falsified by the most recent research showing a clear pattern of diffusion of this type of monument from the west.

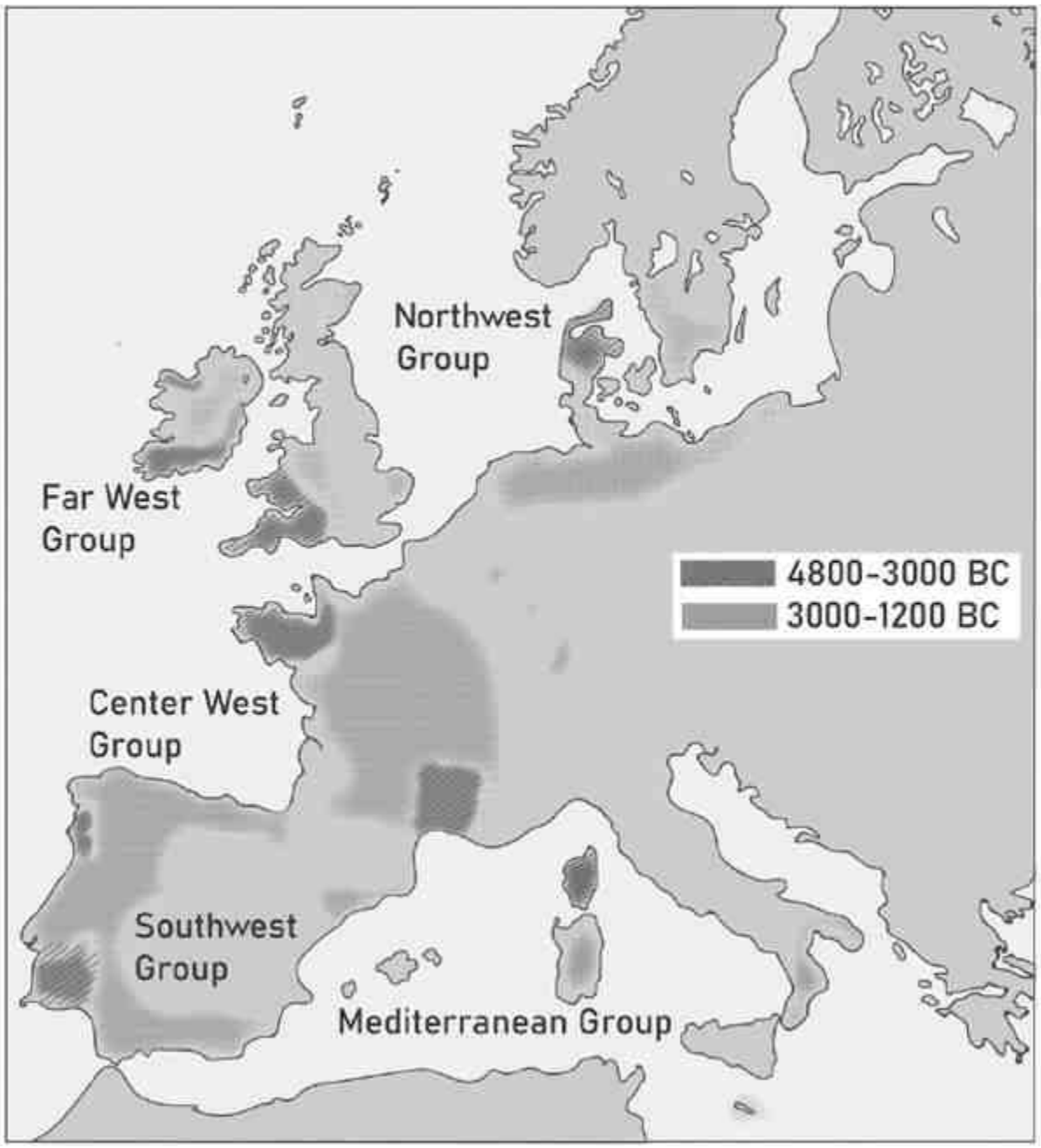

Figure 12.1. Subsequent waves of diffusion of the Atlantic megalithic culture in northern and western Europe.

In Dark Clouds

The earliest Irish traditions contained in the eleventh-century *Lebor Gabála Érenn* (Book of Invasions), describe several invasions of the island, mostly from a westerly and northerly direction. According to the book, prior to the

arrival of the Milesians (believed to be the Indo-European ancestors of the present-day Gaelic peoples), Ireland had been already settled by the Portholonians, Nemedians, Fir Bolg, Fomorians, and Túatha dé Danann. The latter in particular, named after the "Tribe of the Goddess Danu," were said to have come to Ireland in remote antiquity "in dark clouds" and to have landed on the mountains of Connemara. They were a race of demigods, supernatural beings who excelled in every art and science and brought with them the gifts of civilization from four great island cities to the north of Ireland called Falias, Gorias, Murias, and Finias.[*30] Their arrival may have coincided with at least one major episode of land subsidence in the North Atlantic, particularly in the region of the submerged Porcupine Bank and Rockall Plateau.

Ireland is home to one of the largest concentrations of megalithic monuments in all of Europe. While the earliest Irish stone monuments are found at Carrowmore, on the western coast of the island, the most spectacular are found in the East, at Newgrange, Knowth, and Dowth in County Meath, and date to approximately 3200 BCE (see Plates 47, 48, and 49).

A closely related culture had by the fourth millennium BCE already colonized the Orkney Islands, off the northern tip of Scotland, building such monuments as the Ring of Brodgar, Skara Brae, and the great chambered cairns of the Eagles and Maeshowe. These are not only the oldest and northernmost megalithic monuments in Europe, but also some of the most sophisticated. The main chamber of Maeshowe, encased in a mound measuring 35 meters (115 feet) in diameter, is a masterpiece of megalithic technology consisting of hundreds of carefully crafted and fitted flagstones weighing up to 30 tons. As with the monument at Newgrange, the entrance passageway is precisely oriented to the winter solstice sunrise and leads into a chamber with a corbelled vault nearly 5 meters (16 feet) high. The earliest examples of the so-called grooved ware pottery style are also found on Orkney, from where this style is believed to have spread to the rest of the British Isles.

On the western coast of Ireland are also found curious cyclopean structures of polygonal stones. The conventional dating of these structures to the first centuries of the Christian era was questioned by the noted antiquarian George Petrie in the mid-1800s, on account of their great similarity with the cyclopean monuments of Italy and Greece.[11] No other

examples of this type of construction can be found in the rest of the British Isles, and it is, in fact, unique: the only possible explanation for its appearance on the western coast of Ireland is that it was brought there already fully developed from some now sunken land to the west—a relic, perhaps, of the great Sea Peoples migrations of the third and second millennia BCE.

It is possible that a part of this migration pushed farther eastward and southward in search of better lands. During medieval times, it was commonly believed that the builders of Stonehenge had come from Ireland, where the great stone circle had been first erected by a vanished race of giants and then transported by magical means to the Salisbury plain.[12]

What is certain is that, from the very beginning, this civilization already possessed a perfectly developed culture, an organized religion and society, an advanced knowledge of mathematics and astronomy, and a distinctive artistic tradition exemplified by the grooved ware pottery style.

Stone Age Computers

The high degree of astronomical sophistication shown by the earliest European megalithic monuments contrasts sharply with our modernday image of the megalithic builders as brutish barbarians practicing benighted propitiatory rites. A very advanced class of priests and astronomers must have existed among the Neolithic farmers of the British Isles and northwestern France, people who doubtless supervised the building of the great megalithic monuments that we can still admire thousands of years later. These people from beyond the great wall of history certainly possessed an accurate knowledge of the key measurements of the Earth, of astronomy, and of geometry, which they applied to the construction of their monuments.

As at Stonehenge, the position of specific stones would have served to track the solstices and the equinoxes, as well as the movements of the sun, the moon, and the stars. This would have allowed the megalithic builders to perform sophisticated astronomical calculations and to pass on this knowledge to future generations. One example is the famous Calendar Stone of Knowth, containing a division of the nineteen-year metonic cycle of the moon into 235 synodic months. More mysterious still is the origin of the unit of measurement called the megalithic yard. First discovered by Oxford professor Alexander Thom in 1955, this unit seems to have been in almost

universal use during the Neolithic period over an immense area comprising the whole of the British Isles, northern France, and the western Mediterranean. At 82.967 centimeters (2.722 feet) long, the megalithic yard is a scientifically exact fraction of the degree of latitude. There are, in fact, exactly 366 megalithic yards—the same as the number of sunrises in a solar year—to one arc second of latitude.[*31] Also, 366 megalithic yards equal 1,000 Minoan feet of 30.36 centimeters, a unit of measurement broadly employed in the ancient Mediterranean. This unit may be further related to another unit discovered by Professor Roberto Mortari among the polygonal megalithic ruins of Italy and Greece. Known as the "Pelasgian finger," it measures 1.536 centimeters (0.6 inch). As it turns out, there are exactly 20 Pelasgian fingers in one Minoan foot and 20,000 in one arc second of latitude. The megalithic yard may relate as well as to the Egyptian Royal cubit, as shown by author John Ivimy and archaeologist Euan MacKie.[13]

Nearly all stone circles in England and Scotland have diameters or circumferences set out in exact multiple numbers of megalithic yards. Other circles had more complex shapes, such as ellipses and flattened circles whose dimensions appear to be based on Pythagorean triangles, also measured in megalithic yards.[14]

Voyages of the Megalithic Builders

If the English megalithic monuments, such as Stonehenge, were the work of a people who had probably immigrated from Scotland or Ireland, those of Brittany and northwestern France appear to reflect a separate wave of colonization from the Atlantic.

While sharing the greatest similarity of style and architecture with the early menhirs and passage graves of Scotland and Ireland, the French monuments show from a very early epoch a unique tendency toward monumentality, quite possibly driven by better access to natural resources and a larger population. The enormous menhir of Er Grah, weighing an estimated 355 tons, was erected around 4700 BCE, at the same time as another eighteen nearby stones weighing between 40 and 200 tons. Er Grah stands not far from the famous alignments of Carnac and the exceptional passage grave of Gavrinis, which appears to be an almost exact copy of the Irish and Scottish monuments of Newgrange and Maeshowe. The proximity

of all these sites to the sea and the frequent depictions of boats and marine animals that are found on the stones suggest that a great seafaring civilization was responsible for their construction over 6,500 years ago.

These early seafarers may have penetrated as far south as the coasts of Spain, North Africa, and the western Mediterranean. The great dolmen of Menga near Antequera, in southern Spain, dates to 3700 BCE and is of a type identical to the passage graves and long barrows of northern Europe. It was covered by a tumulus with a diameter of 50 meters (164 feet), and one of its capstones has an estimated weight of over 200 tons. Megalithic passage graves of a very similar type are also found on the coast of Portugal, near Évora, and at Fontvieille, in the south of France. An enormous stone circle formed of 175 standing stones exists at M'zorah, on the Atlantic coast of Morocco. This great stone circle, the largest in all of Africa, appears to have been constructed by the same culture that also created the megalithic monuments of Ireland, Britain, and France, as evidenced by the use of the same units of measurement and mathematical proportions.[15]

When plotted on a map, all these cradles of megalithic civilization seem to follow a natural sea route that marks the path of a great eastward and southward migration, from the west of the British Isles along the Atlantic coast of Europe and Africa and into the Mediterranean. In no way can megalithic building be considered a mere phase in the development of civilization, attained independently by different peoples inhabiting the Atlantic Seaboard. It must instead be regarded as a single, coherent *system* that originated with a specific people or race and spread by means of natural sea routes at the end of the Neolithic period.

THE PELASGIAN COLONIES

The Sea Peoples who repeatedly invaded the Mediterranean between the fourth and the second millennia BCE were probably part of the same commonwealth of peoples that gave rise to what we have called the Atlantic megalithic culture. There is evidence, moreover, that just as the diffusion of this megalithic civilization followed at least three different waves, each separated by several hundred years of "megalithic stasis," the Sea Peoples invasions also occurred in waves spanning several millennia, and they were not limited to Egypt but also affected large areas of both the eastern and

western Mediterranean at the same time.

The original homeland of the Sea Peoples must have been in the West, in the open Atlantic Ocean. Far from being the barbarian hordes imagined by certain historians, these Sea Peoples brought with them an advanced culture that knew the use of metals and had mastered the arts of sailing and megalithic stone building. All over Europe, North Africa, and the Near East, they mixed with the earlier substrate of the neo-Atlantean diaspora, giving rise to the mighty race of the Pelasgians, which would dominate much of Italy, Greece, and Anatolia until at least the latter half of the second millennium BCE.

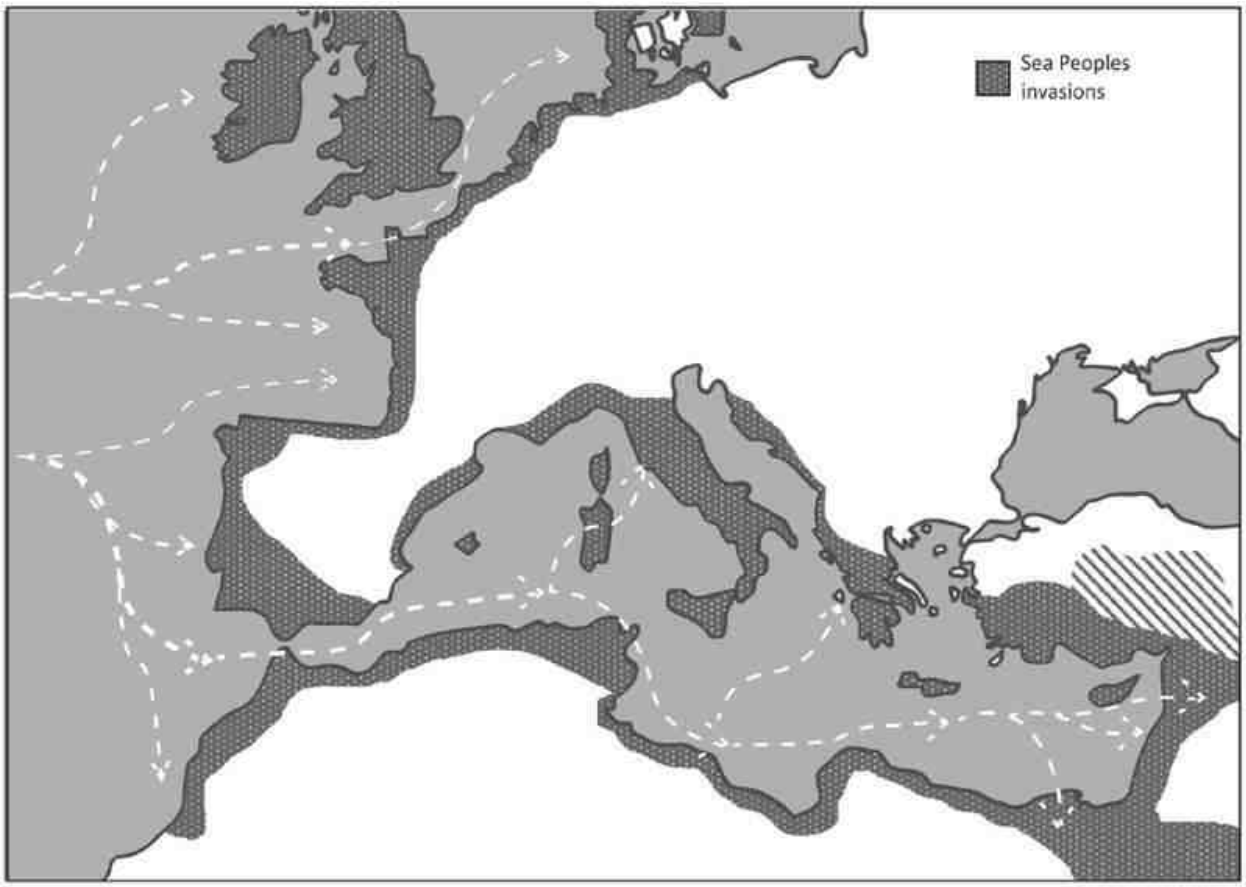

Figure 12.2. Extent of the Sea Peoples invasions from the west and into northern Europe, the Mediterranean, North Africa, and the Near East.

The Riddle of the Pelasgians

To the ancient Greeks and Romans, the Pelasgians represented the original pre-Indo-European substrate that the invading Indo-Europeans encountered over the course of their migrations into Europe and the Mediterranean in the second and first millennia BCE. Far from being a pure race or a clearly recognizable ethnicity, the Pelasgians were themselves a product of the Atlantean diaspora and of various waves of Sea Peoples from the Atlantic Seaboard who mixed with indigenous groups of hunter-gatherers and early Neolithic farmers from Anatolia.

The name of Pelasgians may be related to *pelagos,* the Greek word for "sea," which would allow for a tentative identification of the Pelasgians with the Sea Peoples of Egyptian records.

For centuries before the time of the Greeks and the Phoenicians, the Pelasgians dominated the Mediterranean, forming a true thalassocracy based on the control of the western sea routes and the Atlantic tin trade.

The area of the greatest Pelasgian influence can be roughly approximated by the diffusion of the polygonal style of megalithic architecture and by the use of the Pelasgian alphabet and its various linguistic derivatives.

The same style of polygonal construction is found among the ruins of Italy, Greece, Palestine, Syria, Lebanon, and Turkey, manifesting itself almost as a manner of expression of the same conquering race.[16] These monuments were always attributed by the classical authors to the Pelasgians, or to the even earlier races of the Titans and the Cyclopes.[17] Never did they attribute their construction to the ancestors of the present populations, the Indo-European Greeks and Romans, who seem to have simply reoccupied the monuments of a vanished race.

The Walls of the Cyclops

While the cyclopean monuments of Greece and Sardinia consist mostly of unwrought stones, the finest examples from Italy and Turkey consist of large polygonal stone blocks precisely fitted together in a way that resembles the polygonal stonework of Peru and Bolivia. The exact mode of construction of these polygonal walls has never been satisfactorily explained, making it thus even more unlikely that this technique could have developed spontaneously in lands so far apart—a coincidence that Ignatius Donnelly would call "the most remarkable in the history of architecture."[18]

Archaeologists and architecture historians have since identified four different styles, or “manners,” of polygonal construction. The *first manner* is also the crudest and does not require any type of fitting or intentional design of the shape of the blocks, which are simply piled on top of each other. In the *second manner,* the stones are roughly shaped and assembled in such a way as to minimize the space within the joints. Walls of the *third manner* are such that each stone is precisely cut into a definite polygonal shape to ensure a perfect fit between the blocks. The *fourth manner* differs from traditional polygonal masonry in that the blocks are laid in courses. In this respect, it resembles ashlar masonry, except that the courses are not perfectly horizontal and the blocks are often trapezoidal. The enormous technical complexity involved in the construction of megalithic walls of the third and fourth manners shows that polygonal masonry can in no way be considered a simple evolution stage toward regular square block construction. Whereas square blocks can be used exactly as they arrive from the quarry, polygonal stonework requires the hard work of fitting and carving in situ, so that it molds perfectly into the next one, notwithstanding the immense weight and size of some of the stones (see Plates 50, 51, and 52).

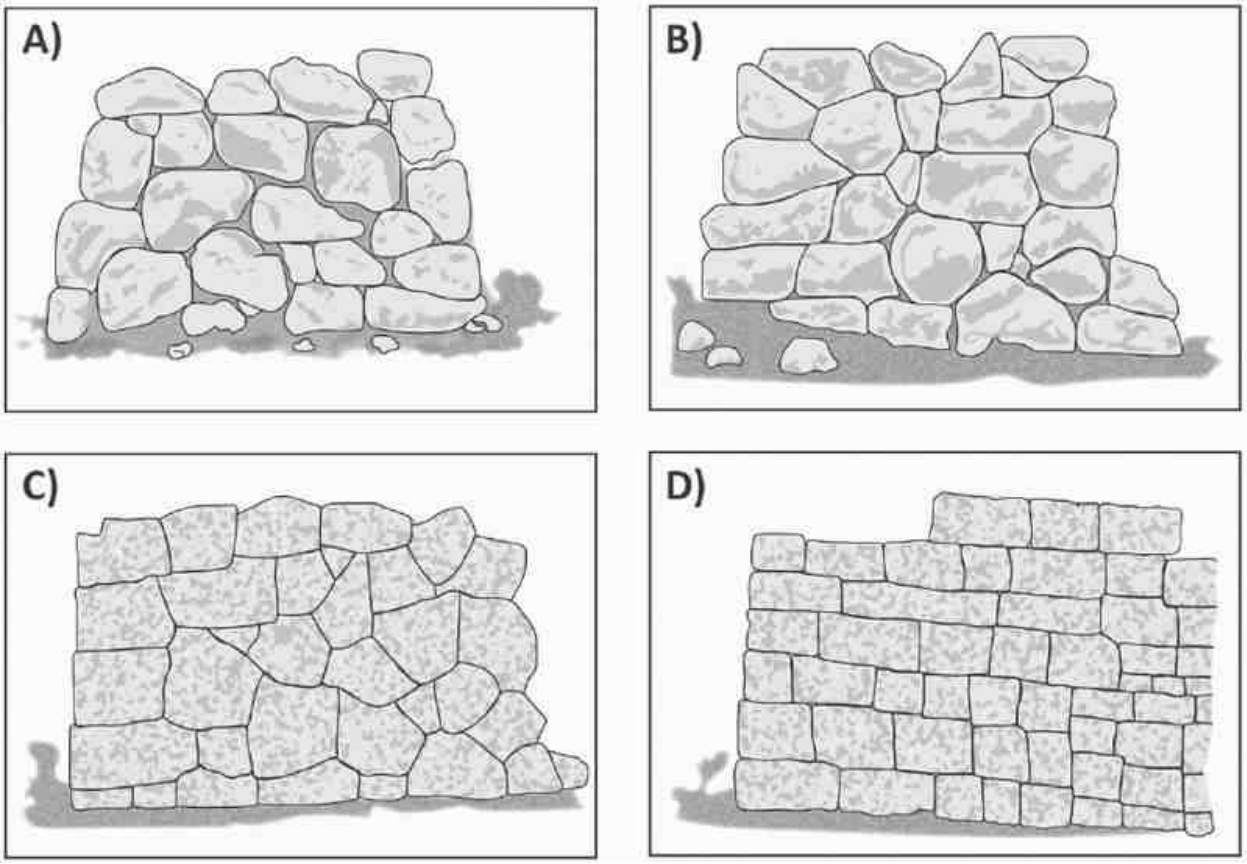

Figure 12.3. The four manners of polygonal construction: (A) first manner, with no intentional fitting of blocks or design; (B) second manner, with stones roughly shaped and assembled; (C) third manner, with stones cut in polygonal shapes and fitted; and (D) fourth manner, with fitted stones arranged in courses.

True polygonal masonry does not seem to have been extensively employed in the Andes of South America until the late neo-Atlantean and post-Atlantean periods, whereas it is entirely absent from the neoAtlantean ruins of Egypt and the Levant.

If the polygonal constructions of Greece, Italy, and Peru are too similar to suggest the idea of independent origins, the only possible conclusion is that this style originated on Atlantis itself sometime before its final sinking, perhaps in response to telluric disturbances at the end of the Younger Dryas, and was from there carried over by Atlantean survivors to both sides of the Atlantic.[19]

The diffusion of polygonal masonry in the Mediterranean region was not, therefore, a result of the neo-Atlantean diaspora from Egypt and the Levant, but must have come from a western source.

The earliest examples of polygonal masonry from the Mediterranean region are found in Italy, at Orbetello and Pyrgi, with dates as early as the middle of the sixth millennium BCE. From Italy, this technique spread to Greece and Anatolia during the fourth and third millennia BCE, following the path of the Sea Peoples invasions. In Italy, as in Greece and Peru, polygonal stonework was preferred over the square block technique due to its obvious statical advantages and greater earthquake resistance.[20] In this sense, it might have represented an adaptation of earlier Atlantean megalithic stone technology to times of intense seismic activity.

True polygonal masonry is conspicuously absent from Egypt and the Levant outside of Turkey but is found among the ruins of North Africa, in the southwestern part of Cyrenaica, at Dougga in Tunisia, and at Lixus in Morocco. Cruder examples of the cyclopean polygonal style are found in Spain, at Niebla, Ibros, Ampurias, and Tarragona, and are attested as far west as Ireland, at Kiltiernan and Kilmacduagh in County Galway, and on the Solovetsky Islands of Russia.

This seems to further support the idea that the Pelasgians, with which the technique of polygonal masonry is most closely associated, were indeed a Western people, part of a great Sea Peoples coalition that repeatedly entered the Mediterranean in the centuries and millennia following the final sinking of Atlantis.

The Pelasgian Alphabet

A further evidence of the Pelasgians' Western origin is offered by their language and alphabet. Many seemingly isolated languages attested in both Europe and North Africa in antiquity may be of Pelasgian origin. These include the Basque, proto-Iberian, Eastern Libyan, and Etruscan languages. Of those, Etruscan shares the greatest affinity with an obscure dialect spoken on the Greek island of Lemnos, as well as with the mysterious and yet undeciphered Minoan Linear A.[21] Further linguistic connections have been suggested between the Basque, the Etruscan, and the proto-Iberian languages of southern Spain, as well as with the Libyan and Berber languages of North

Africa. Yet perhaps the strongest evidence of the Western, pre-Indo-European origin of these languages comes from the diffusion of the Libyan-Iberian alphabet.

The use of this particular script in the Iberian peninsula may date back to 4000 BCE, as shown by inscriptions from Dolmen d'Alvao in Portugal and on an inscribed bone fragment from Bancal de la Coruña, Spain.[*32] It shares, moreover, a majority of signs with the Etruscan, Lemnian, Minoan Linear A, and the Tifinagh and Libyan alphabets of North Africa. The great diffusion and antiquity of what we may call the Pelasgian alphabet is further attested by Sir William M. Flinders Petrie, who considered it as the basis of one of the three systems of writing in use throughout Egyptian history, called the demotic. Its origins were certainly in the West, for according to Petrie, "The geometrical marks of the alphabetic system appear with the first prehistoric people, who seem to have been Libyans." These signs, Petrie observed, "belonged to the West, and were the source of all the Mediterranean alphabets."[22] It was the original dynastic race that first brought these letter signs into Egypt. The Phoenicians and Semites did not invent their alphabets, but simply borrowed what was essentially a Pelasgian invention. This early alphabet would have consisted of sixty letters, which were then reduced to twenty-two by the Phoenicians.[23] The same letter signs that are found in Egypt, Karia, and Spain can also be found on rock inscriptions belonging to the extinct people of the Guanches in the Canary Islands. Additionally, these signs form the base of certain southern Arabian scripts, of the northern European runes, and of the Tifinagh alphabet still used by the Berbers of the Sahara. They do not seem to have undergone any previous stage of pictographic or syllabic writing but appear already fully developed long before their introduction in Egypt and Phoenicia.

The Libyans who brought their alphabet into Egypt at the beginning of the dynastic period were called Thuheni in contemporary inscriptions, meaning the "light-colored" or "fair-complexioned" people. Their language may have been morphologically related to that of the mysterious Etruscans, who also employed a variant of the Libyan-Pelasgian alphabet.[24] To the west of Egypt, the diffusion of the alphabet and of megalithic architecture has been always associated with the extra-African element represented by the Berbers and the blond peoples (xanthochroids) of North Africa, who were almost certainly invaders in a country "primarily populated with autochthonous

blacks and bruns."[25]

THE TIME OF THE CYCLOPES IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

Between the fourth and the second millennia BCE, the Pelasgian thalassocracy extended over much of southern Spain, North Africa, Italy, and Greece, and as far as Egypt and central Anatolia.

In Italy, a Pelasgian presence is attested since at least the fourth and possibly as early as the sixth millennium BCE. It was the Pelasgians who reintroduced into Italy the tradition of megalithic building and cyclopean architecture, resettling many sites of the earlier Saturnian civilization. The megalithic pyramid of Monte d'Accodi, on the large Italian island of Sardinia, has been dated to 2800 BCE but could be older, whereas a dating to the middle of the fourth millennium BCE has been proposed by Roberto Mortari for the polygonal walls of Pyrgi, near Rome. The walls, which run for a length of nearly 800 meters (2,625 feet) along the coast, bear evidence of having been repeatedly submerged by the sea when sea levels in this part of the Mediterranean were nearly 5 meters (16 feet) higher than today, about 3100 BCE. The walls of Orbetello, in Tuscany, pose an even greater mystery. The foundations of the walls are presently submerged at a depth of 4 meters (13 feet) below the sea, and only rise for 3 to 4 meters (10 to 13 feet) above water. The accuracy of the stonework below water and the depth at which the foundations were laid suggest that the walls were built at a time when the entire Lagoon of Orbetello was dry land, over 7,000 years ago.[26]

The Star Cities of Ancient Latium

At least four hundred sites with polygonal walls are known in central Italy alone, a number far surpassing that of any other Mediterranean land.[27] Their chronology spans over three thousand years, from the settlement of the first Pelasgian colony in the fourth millennium BCE to the late second millennium BCE, when a second Pelasgian colony likely reached the coasts of Italy from the eastern regions of the Levant and Anatolia. The polygonal walls encircling the citadels of Alatri, Norba, Arpino, Ferentino, Segni, Amelia,

Sezze, Cori, and Circeii are the most refined examples of this style of construction in the Italian peninsula, and they may date to the time of the second Pelasgian colony. Traces of an even earlier Pelasgian or Saturnian colonization may be found, however, in the analysis conducted by researcher Giorgio Copiz of the position of the main cities of ancient Latium, which Copiz shows to match that of the stars in the constellations of Leo and Gemini.

The two patterns, moreover, appear to overlay each other, so as to suggest two different epochs of construction: the first during the Age of Leo, between 10,500 and 8000 BCE, and the second during the Age of Gemini, between 6500 and 4000 BCE.[28] These findings would corroborate the hypothesis of two separate colonizations of Italy in the post-Atlantean period, at the time of the Saturnian and the Pelasgian colonies, while also confirming the great antiquity of these Italian monuments.

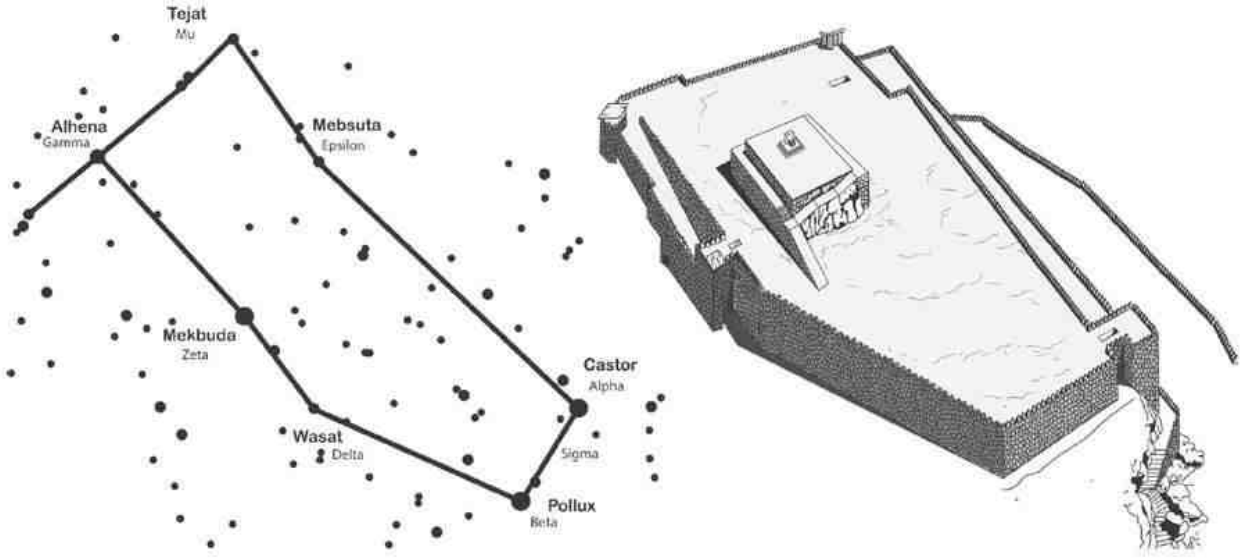

Figure 12.4. Reconstruction and plan of the Acropolis of Alatri near Rome, Italy, with the layout of the stars of the constellation Gemini (after Giovenale, 1900).

The Pelasgians of Greece

Across the Aegean Sea, Greece had been already settled by Pelasgians during the third millennium BCE. These Sea Peoples brought with them a superior megalithic technology, which they likely borrowed from models already

diffused in the Italian peninsula. The earliest Greek monuments, among which we should include the small megalithic stone pyramid of Hellenikon, dated to 2730 ± 720 BCE, are typical of the second and third manners of polygonal construction.[29] By the second millennium BCE, however, the construction becomes less accurate, and first manner walls are far more prevalent.

At Mycenae, ashlar masonry is attested together with examples of the first three manners of polygonal construction. Also at Mycenae, the Treasury of Atreus is perhaps the finest megalithic monument in this part of the Aegean and a masterpiece of cyclopean engineering. It consists of a huge semisubterranean chamber, 14.5 meters (48 feet) in diameter, covered by an ogival dome, or tholos, realized using the corbel vault technique, with a height of 13.5 meters (44 feet). The entrance corridor, or dromos, is flanked by enormous megaliths, of which the largest weighs an estimated 120 tons.[30] The corbel vault technique appeared for the first time in the Maltese megalithic temples and is also found in Spain and on the island of Sardinia, as well as on Orkney. That no mention of these curious monuments is made in the Homeric poems suggests that this architectural type had already fallen into disuse by the second and first millennia BCE, at the time of the Mycenean and Dorian invasions of Greece. Like the Indo-European Hittites, the Myceneans appear relatively late on the historical scene during the Late Bronze Age (ca. 1600–1100 BCE), and they were almost certainly invaders in a land that had been already occupied by Pelasgians since at least the third millennium BCE. Pelasgians were the architects of the great walls of Tyrins and Mycenae and of the many cyclopean ruins that are now only improperly called Mycenean.[31]

The Pelasgians of Lebanon, Israel, and Turkey

In the East, throughout the regions of the Levant and Anatolia, the Pelasgians took the name of Hethaei, or “People of Heth,” as they would be known in the Bible.[32]

From the books of Joshua and Deuteronomy, we know that the Hethaei were already firmly established in Canaan at the beginning of the second millennium BCE. Their possessions stretched from Lebanon to the Euphrates, but their true home was in the West, toward the setting sun.[33] They were

counted, moreover, among the Nephilim nations to be utterly destroyed at the time of the Israelites' conquest of Canaan, in the fifteenth or fourteenth centuries BCE.[34]

In all the territories occupied by the Hethaei in Canaan and eastern-central Anatolia, we find similar examples of cyclopean walls and megalithic architecture. The walls of Sichem, Jericho, Megiddo, Lachish, Ghezer, and Ay, as well as some of the earliest fortifications of Jebusite Jerusalem, were the work of a people who knew the use of bronze and were expert stonemasons and metallurgists. The same style of construction is found in Anatolia among the ruins of Hattusas and Alaça Höyük. The wonderful walls of Hattusas, which extend over a length of nearly 8 kilometers (5 miles), date to a time much earlier than that of the historical Hittites, an Indo-European people contemporary with the Greek Myceneans who occupied eastern-central Anatolia around 1700 BCE. The similarity between these walls of Hattusas and those of Mycenae, Tyrins, Norba, and Alatri suggests that the Pelasgians and the Hethaei were ultimately but two different denominations of the same people.

13

THE NEPHILIM WARS

For all its apparent military strength and artistic and cultural achievements, the Pelasgian thalassocracy did not last. Perhaps at the root of its collapse lay the fact that the Pelasgians were never able to form a true empire or state of their own. They were never more than a loose confederation of peoples with uncertain and rapidly dwindling ethnic and linguistic ties. Only sporadically would they form political or military alliances, which were then unable to pose an effective resistance to the threat of foreign invasion and cultural assimilation by other peoples.

By the twenty-second century BCE, the splendid civilizations of dynastic Egypt and Sumer lay in ruins, the result of a mix of climate change, crop failures, civil wars, and foreign invasions. This was accompanied by a generalized collapse of the post-Atlantean and Pelasgian potentates in the eastern Mediterranean. Over the course of the second millennium BCE, Indo-European and Semitic peoples stormed the Near East, bringing down whatever was left of the Egyptian Middle Kingdom and most of the remaining Pelasgian colonies in Anatolia and Greece. Then, in the twelfth century BCE, a new chain of cataclysms brought the Bronze Age to a fiery end. In the following centuries, Aryan peoples of Indo-European descent occupied the devastated and now largely depopulated lands of Anatolia, northern Syria, Italy, and Greece, mixing with the local Pelasgian populations and thus planting the seeds of the historical civilizations of Greece and Rome.

THE WARS OF GODS AND MEN

The process of substitution of the indigenous Pelasgian and post-Atlantean roots of European and Mediterranean civilization with the new culture of the invading Indo-Europeans and Aryans took several centuries and was hardly ever complete, with many traces of the previous culture surviving in the languages, costumes, and artistic and religious traditions of the conquerors. It is possible, moreover, that a series of catastrophic events in Egypt and Mesopotamia during the twenty-second century BCE may have significantly accelerated this process by definitely shifting the political and ethnic balance in the Near East in favor of the new Indo-European and Semitic invaders.

The Old Kingdom Collapse

The fall of the Egyptian Old Kingdom in about 2181 BCE marked the end of the rule of the post-Atlantean dynastic race and the rise to power of a Semitic element that had been hitherto relegated to the lower ranks of society. What followed was a dark age of approximately 125 years, known as the First Intermediate Period. This period was accompanied by the dissolution of centralized political authority and the rise of local warlords in the South. A similar dynamic seems to have accompanied the end of Sumerian rule over southern Mesopotamia, culminating with the ultimate conquest of Sumer by Eastern Semitic Akkadians in about 2270 BCE.

The ancient Egyptian text known as The Admonitions of Ipuwer is one of the most important documents dealing with the events that accompanied the end of the Egyptian Old Kingdom and the First Intermediate Period. It describes how a period of extended drought and famine, together with invasions by desert marauders, led to a complete collapse of government authority followed by uncontrolled plundering and violence. “The desert is throughout the land,” we read. “The nomes are laid waste and barbarians from abroad have come to Egypt All is ruin!”[1]

This is, moreover, accompanied by a reversal of the social order, in which “poor men become owners of wealth” and angry mobs shout in the streets, “Let us suppress the powerful among us.”[2] Only in the end does the papyrus

prophesy the coming of a divine king who would once again restore order and stability to the country by inaugurating the period of the Egyptian Middle Kingdom (2050–1710 BCE).

The events described by Ipuwer would be certainly familiar to any student of the fall of empires and the collapse of civilizations. They begin with severe drought and famine, followed by economic collapse, a disintegration of social order and political authority, the destruction of records and administrative structures, a breakdown of law and order, the dissolution of family and societal bonds, fueled by greed and corruption, all eventually leading to civil unrest while exposing the country to the threat of foreign invasion.

The Curse of Akkad

Roughly at the same time as the Old Kingdom collapse, in 2154 BCE, the Empire of Akkad, which for nearly two centuries had ruled over Mesopotamia, the Levant, and Anatolia, collapsed, ushering in a dark age characterized by a generalized collapse of political authority. In this power vacuum, a barbarian Indo-European people from the Zagros Mountains, the Gutians, invaded and occupied large portions of Mesopotamia, which they held until the time of the Third Dynasty of Ur (2112–2004 BCE). The causes of the collapses may have been similar in Mesopotamia and in Egypt. One theory associates them with continental-scale droughts near the time of the so-called 4.2 kiloyear event, which caused one of the widest climate fluctuations of the last ten thousand years and was likely one of the causes of the Indo-European migrations from the steppes of Central Asia. Scientists, however, disagree as to the causes of this major aridification event.

Contemporaneous eyewitness accounts of the 4.2 kiloyear event speak of the “great storm of heaven” that “destroyed cities” and “cut off all that is good from the Land.”[3] They describe “a calamity unknown to man, one that had never been seen before, one which could not be withstood. . . . A land-annihilating storm. . . . An evil wind, like a rushing torrent. . . . A battling storm joined by a scorching heat. . . . By day it deprived the land of the bright sun, in the evening the stars did not shine . . . [it caused] cities to be desolated. . . . Sumer’s rivers it made flow with water that is bitter; its cultivated fields grow weeds, its pastures grow withering plants.”[4]

Researchers Joachim Seifert and Frank Lemke believe that these accounts may describe an actual asteroid impact that occurred in southern Mesopotamia in 2154 BCE, one whose effects were felt as far away as Egypt and northern India.[5]

Later sources attributed the catastrophe to the impiety of the king Naram Sin. A grandson of Sargon the Great, the founder of the Akkadian Empire in 2335 BCE, Naram Sin has often been compared to a second Nimrod. He boasted such titles as "King of the Four Quarters of the World" and "God of Akkad," and he significantly expanded the borders of the Akkadian Empire into northern Mesopotamia and Syria. His famous victory stela, re-created in figure 13.1 (below), depicts him as a physical giant, towering over his enemies in the style of the biblical Nephilim kings. In the ancient Sumerian text known as *The Curse of Akkad*, Naram Sin is said to have risen up in revolt against the gods, smiting Enlil's chief E-kur temple in the city of Nippur. This act of rebellion by Naram Sin, we read, was what brought the wrath of the gods on Akkad. Like a "roaring storm," Enlil took the land, causing its soil to produce no fruit and the crops to whither. A barbarian people, the Gutians, became masters of the land, the dead lay unburied in the streets, and the city gates were thrown down and covered in mud.[6]

So complete was the destruction of Akkad that its ruins have to this day never been found. Nor was Akkad the sole victim of the wrath of the gods, for a number of other Sumerian cities, including the mighty city of Ur, all met the same fate at around the same time as Akkad. In the contemporaneous text known as the Lamentation for the Destruction of Ur, we read that heat blazed in front of the storm, while Enlil "hurled flames." The storm covered Ur "like a garment . . . spread over it like a linen." The city was "reduced to ruins," "corpses were piled," and "possessions were scattered about." Water became contaminated, the rivers ran dry, and their beds filled with dust, while people and animals "breathed with difficulty" and died. If Seifert and Lemke are correct and a cosmic impact was what caused the catastrophe, the fallout from the impact would have covered much of southern Mesopotamia. Indeed, archaeological soil samples from the area show anomalous concentrations of tiny microspherules that can only form at temperatures in excess of 1,000°C (1,832°F). Anyone caught in the open would have perished instantly, in the same way as the Sumerian texts describe a heat so intense that it "scorched the body of the people" and caused corpses to "melt away like fat in the

sun.”[*33]

Figure 13.1. Victory stela of Naram Sin (ca. 2250–2220 BCE), originally from Susa, Iran. Now held in the Louvre Museum, Paris, catalog number: AO-Sb-4.

In the aftermath of the cataclysm, neighboring peoples took advantage of the confusion to occupy Sumer: the Gutians from the north and the Elamites from the east.

The Fate of Sodom and Gomorrah

A very similar catastrophe seems to have befallen the biblical cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. By the third millennium BCE, Sodom and the cities of the Valley of Siddim were all powerful Nephilim strongholds. The book of Genesis describes their destruction by Yahweh with a rain of fire and burning sulfur, a description strongly reminiscent of a meteoritic impact. "He overthrew those cities and the entire plain," we read, "destroying all those living in the cities, and also all the vegetation in the land."[7] The smoke of the fires was like "smoke from a furnace," while people and vegetation were turned by the blaze into statues of salt. The same tale is repeated by a number of classical authors, including Strabo and Josephus, who say that the cities were all "burned up by the wrath of god," whereas "only the shadows of the five cities are still to be seen."[8] From a Gnostic perspective, the "sin of Sodom" had nothing to do with the pretended sexual depravation of its inhabitants, but with their "angelic" wisdom. Thus, according to the second-century gnostic sect of the Cainites, the people of Sodom were persecuted on account of their knowledge, which threatened the plans of the demiurge to enslave mankind. The biblical Yahweh thus wished to destroy the mystery schools that the postdiluvian Nephilim had established at Sodom and Gomorrah after the fall of the Tower of Babel, together with their giant inhabitants.

Scientists now believe they have found proof of a massive asteroid or cometary explosion in the region where Sodom once stood over four thousand years ago. According to archaeologist and biblical scholar Phillip Silva, at that time an airburst meteor blasted a 25-kilometer-wide (16 mile) area on the northeastern edge of the Dead Sea, turning this once fertile valley into the lifeless desert that we know today. Silva believes he has identified the ruins of the biblical Sodom at a site called Tell-el-Hammam. There, he has found evidence of cataclysmic destruction by fire, as well as soil vitrification that can only have occurred at temperatures of thousands of degrees Celsius. The evidence points to an explosion equivalent to the detonation of a 10-megaton atomic bomb, capable of instantaneously generating temperatures "as hot as the surface of the Sun."[9]

Sodom would have been then a thriving commercial center, surrounded by massive fortifications that included a huge stone and mudbrick city wall. While the date of the destruction and abandonment of Sodom remains a

matter of debate, biblical chronology situates it firmly in the twenty-second century BCE, at the same time as the fall of the Egyptian Old Kingdom and Akkad.

By the beginning of the second millennium BCE, only a few postAtlantean strongholds remained in Mesopotamia and the Levant, mostly situated in what is today's Palestine. These would survive until the time of the Israelites' conquest of Canaan as linguistic and ethnic isolates in a world increasingly dominated by Semitic and Indo-European peoples.

Judgment of the Nephilim

Could there be a deeper connection between the fall of the Egyptian Old Kingdom, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the demise of the Akkadian Empire in 2200 BCE? If a cosmic impact around the 4.2 kiloyear boundary was responsible, then *did someone, perhaps a deity, will an asteroid strike over Canaan and southern Mesopotamia?* Or was the cause of the devastation something other than a wandering asteroid or comet, as suggested by the very high levels of radioactivity still present in the area?[10]

And why, then, would a deity will the complete destruction of these cities and kingdoms? A reason may be found in the *Book of Jubilees,* and it involves the trespassing of boundaries established after the fall of the last neo-Atlantean Empire.

The definitive shattering of the neo-Atlantean world order left a world divided among the powers of the fourth and the fifth root races. This was the meaning of the episode, remembered in nearly all the world's mythologies, of the division of the Earth among the gods, which according to biblical chronology occurred after the fall of the Tower of Babel. Thus, in Genesis 10:25, we read that it was in the days of Peleg, a great-grandson of Noah, that "the Earth was divided." This division, of which we find an echo also in the Sumerian, Greek, Egyptian, and Roman mythological traditions, may be seen as the equivalent of a divine peace treaty marking exclusive areas of influence, each under the rule of a separate archon or potentate.

In the *Book of Jubilees,* Ham, Cush, and Mizraim accuse Canaan of having settled in a land "which is not thine, and which did not fall to you by lot," threatening that if his occupation continued "thou and thy sons will fall in the land and be accursed through sedition; for by sedition ye have settled,

and by sedition will thy children fall, and thou shalt be rooted out forever."[11]

Furthermore, the passage seems to imply that the land of Canaan's inheritance lay not in the East, between Lebanon and Egypt, but "to the West (that is to) the Sea." This is particularly interesting, for it suggests that the Canaanites (who, as shown in the previous chapter, were themselves Pelasgians) were illegally occupying the lands to the east of the Mediterranean Sea in what is today's Palestine and Lebanon. One of the effects of the Sea Peoples invasions of the fourth and third millennia BCE was therefore a shattering of the peace among the gods that had been maintained since the time of the fall of the Tower of Babel—an even that would have catastrophic consequences for the delicate equilibria of the postdiluvian world. Even so, the Canaanite expansion may not have been perceived as too grave a threat until the military conquests of another Nephilim king, Naram Sin of Akkad, threatened to permanently alter the balance of power in the region and potentially lead to the creation of a new Nephilim empire bridging the lands between Canaan and Sumer.

So severe was the punishment inflicted on the rebellious cities that, we read, "the gods themselves became frightened" as the "evil wind" carrying the radioactive fallout from the impact areas brought devastation not only to Sumer but also to Egypt and the rest of the Levant. Numerous contemporaneous Sumerian lamentations deal with the apparent impotence of the gods in the face of this unknown calamity. "The gods evacuated Uruk," we read in one lament. "They kept away from it; they hid in the mountains; they escaped to the distant plains." And also, "Ninki, its great lady, flying like a bird, left her city. . . . Father Enki stayed outside the city. . . . For the fate of his harmed city he wept with bitter tears."[12]

Ultimately, it may have been because of the devastating consequences of the weapons employed against Akkad and Sodom that the gods resorted to more conventional warfare in the aftermath of the catastrophe, waging instead a "proxy war," of which the clearest example may be found in the Israelites' conquest of Canaan a few centuries later.

A SECOND DIASPORA?

The effects of the 4.2 kiloyear event were felt over a broad area, from the

Near East to central Asia. As far as the Indus Valley, precipitation levels dropped, rivers and lakes dried up, and formerly fertile agricultural regions turned into deserts. The aridification of the Eurasian steppes may have been itself one of the triggers for the great Indo-European and Aryan migrations of the second millennium BCE, which brought further devastation to the lands of Egypt and Mesopotamia.

The Hyksos Invasions

Beginning in approximately 1800 BCE, a Semitic or Indo-European people, known from contemporary accounts as the Hyksos, seized control of Egypt and of large parts of the Near East. According to Manetho, these "Asiatics" subdued first the region of the delta and then the rest of Egypt by military force. "They easily overpowered the rulers of the land, burned our cities ruthlessly, razed to the ground the temples of the gods, and treated all the natives with a cruel hostility, massacring some and leading into slavery the wives and children of others."[13]

The first-century historian Josephus identified the Hyksos with the Hebrews prior to their conquest of Canaan, thus making the biblical Exodus coincide with the Hyksos' departure from Egypt. Such an event may have been brought about by the Thera eruption of 1600 BCE, which devastated coastal settlements and caused heavy ashfall and unseasonable cold across the ancient Mediterranean. It was only in 1550 BCE that the Eighteenth Dynasty pharaoh Ahmose succeeded at expelling the Hyksos from Egypt.

The Conquest of Canaan

According to the Hebrew Bible, the Israelites wandered for forty years in the desert after their departure from Egypt before reaching the "Promised Land" of Canaan. There, they encountered a land thickly populated by "giants," the descendants of the postdiluvian Nephilim. In the book of Numbers, the Canaanites are described as a people of "great stature," the "sons of Anak, who came from the Nephilim," in whose sight the Israelites were "like grasshoppers."[14] The book of Genesis identifies them with the Hethaei, the "children of Heth," a Pelasgian people who may have reached the coasts of Palestine during the fourth or the early third millennium BCE.[15]

Like the Pelasgians of Italy and Greece, the Canaanites possessed many large, fortified cities that were "fenced with high walls, gates and bars."[16] So strong were the defenses of the Canaanite cities of Jericho, Lachish, Sichem, Hazor, and Megiddo that the people entrenched in their towns might have well been thought invincible.[17] Yet the Israelites, although vastly outnumbered, managed to conquer and destroy one Canaanite city after another. *How did they do it?*

The Bible makes it abundantly clear that the conquest of Canaan by the Israelites would have never been possible without the direct intervention of Yahweh. The price of God's help, however, would be no less than the complete genocide of the Nephilim giants. Thus, Yahweh commanded his people to "utterly destroy" the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, so as to "not leave alive anything that breathes."[18] The Israelites should make no treaty with them and "show them no mercy."[19]

First of the Amorite cities to be conquered by the Israelites was Jericho, and this only through the power of the Ark of the Covenant, which caused the walls of Jericho to collapse. Next were Jerusalem, Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish, and Eglon, whose inhabitants the Israelites "utterly destroyed . . . the men, and the women, and the little ones," leaving "none to remain."[20] There was not one city too strong for them, for "the Lord god delivered all unto [them]."[21] Only the northern Canaanite kings attempted a last, desperate resistance led by Jabin, king of Hazor, but they too were vanquished in the battle of the Waters of Merom. The Israelites then proceeded to destroy Hazor by fire, together with all the people in the cities of Madon, Shimron, Achshaph, Debir, and Anab. As a result of Joshua's victorious military campaigns, we are told, "There was none of the Anakim left in the land of the Children of Israel; only in Gaza, in Gath, and in Ashdod, did some remain."[22]

Yahweh admonished the Israelites to not take husbands or wives from the Nephilim nations, lest they be "contaminated by their abominations." This is in contrast with the treatment reserved to all the other peoples conquered by the Israelites, whose women and children were to be spared in battle and with whom they should "make alliances" and "offer peace." Perhaps, the question we should ask ourselves after reading these passages is why did this god order the indiscriminate killing of men, women, and children, the complete destruction of cities, and the burning down of temples, statues, and altars?[23] The answer seems to be that—as with the Gigantomachy, or the war of the

gods against the giants in Greek mythology—the purpose of the Israelites' conquest of Canaan was the specific eradication of the Nephilim race and of their civilization from the Near East.

Even so, it is unclear whether the Israelites were ultimately able to drive out the Canaanites entirely from the Promised Land. By 1200 BCE, a second wave of Sea Peoples invasions brought a new people, the Philistines, to the coasts of modern-day Israel and Lebanon. At Gath, Ashdod, and Gaza, the Philistines mixed with the surviving remnants of the Canaanite Nephilim, thus becoming one of Israel's most dangerous enemies. In light of this, it is certainly significant that giants were mentioned among the ranks of the Philistines and that the giant Goliath came from Gath, one of only three Nephilim strongholds that the Israelites could not conquer in the time of Joshua.[24] Recent archaeological evidence shows that the Philistines were themselves a Pelasgian people of possibly Aegean origin.[25] The Philistines remained a significant force in the Near East until 604 BCE, when they were conquered by the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar II. Their legacy and that of the earlier Canaanites, however, lived on in the civilization of the Phoenicians.

The Enigma of Yahweh

This vengeful and even genocidal character of Yahweh depicted in these accounts contrasts sharply with the image of a loving and caring God, the benevolent creator of mankind. Far from being "God" or even "a god," Yahweh is pictured in the Old Testament as a physical creature with typically human needs and frailties, albeit one endowed with an exceptionally long life and seemingly supernatural powers. In this respect, Yahweh does not seem to differ significantly from the Atlantean "sons of the gods." A physical giant, he possessed a shining and radiant countenance, as well as a very advanced form of technology that he did not hesitate to use against his enemies as well as his own people.

Yahweh leaves the Israelites no other choice but to follow and worship him, with such threats as to "wreak misery" upon them, have them "eat the flesh of [their] sons and the flesh of [their] daughters," and make their land a desolation and their cities a ruin.[26] Yahweh would punish his servants severely for even the slightest offense, consuming them with fire, impaling

them in the sun, or causing the ground to swallow them up along with their families.[27] In Yahweh's reprisals, the good are to suffer with the bad, the innocent with the guilty, in a way that denotes, to use the words of authors Christian and Barbara Joy O'Brien, "an essence of vindictiveness and cold-blooded indifference to suffering that is redolent of the worst type of human despots."[28]

The biblical texts show that it was through a very advanced form of technology that Yahweh was able to exert such an absolute control over the Israelites. The same language is used to describe Yahweh's aerial craft in both the book of Exodus and in the visions of Enoch. Its appearance is like a "pillar of cloud" by day and a "pillar of fire" by night, not unlike the "cloud" said to have summoned Enoch to heaven. If anything, this shows that Yahweh was in control of a technology all but identical to the one possessed by the antediluvian Watchers. So does this make Yahweh also a Watcher?

The Hebrew Bible, being written from the perspective of the people of Yahweh, makes a clear distinction between the "Watchers of Heaven" and the evil Watchers or the "Fallen Angels." The latter are certainly one and the same as the "fallen" Atlanteans, whose hybrid progeny, the Nephilim, were the target of Yahweh's genocidal plans. Yahweh and the "Watchers of Heaven" can be therefore none other than the champions of the fifth root race, the Children of the Law of One who opposed the Sons of Belial of esoteric legends.

In this sense, Yahweh may truly be seen as a member, if not the leader himself, of the "Great White Lodge," the occult hierarchy presiding over the fifth root race, as suggested by several Old Testament expressions alluding to Yahweh as he who "judges among the gods" and "stands in the Divine Assembly."[29] In Sumerian mythology, the same role was taken on by the god Enlil, who presided over the Heavenly Assembly and ordered the Great Flood to exterminate mankind.

Either we consider Yahweh/Enlil as an atypical member of the Great White Lodge or we must accept the possibility that the true motives of the occult hierarchy are not as pure as one would like to believe. Far from representing a positive force in the spiritual evolution of mankind, the Great White Brotherhood may truly represent a disguised negative power seeking absolute domination over the material world.

The conquest of Canaan by the Israelites and the destruction of the Nephilim cities of Sodom, Gomorrah, and Akkad by Yahweh may now be seen for what they really were: the last act in a great cosmic war waged between the adepts of the fourth and the fifth root races. The conclusion of this war would result in no less than the complete replacement of the old Atlantean world order with a new world order ruled by gods that appear to be rather enemies than friends of mankind. With the last Atlanteans cast into Tartarus, just as with the fallen angels and the Titans of myth, only the Great White Brotherhood would remain as the sole surviving antediluvian power on Earth.

The Second Pelasgian Colony

Between the seventeenth and the twelfth centuries BCE, following the onslaught of Semitic and Aryan nomadic tribes from the East, a new wave of refugees from the Levant and Anatolia reached the coasts of Italy and Greece. This was, in many ways, a *return* to the Pelasgians' lost homeland in the West. Thus, in the *Aeneid*, the Trojan prince Aeneas was told in a dream to flee the doomed city of Troy to seek out the "Ancient Mother" from whence his ancestors came, a land in the far West that Virgil called Hesperia and that would later become identified with Italy.[30]

The Trojan War also marked the closure of the "heroic cycle" and with it the end of the Pelasgian thalassocracy. It was a clash of two civilizations, the Pelasgian Trojans and the Mycenean (Indo-European) Greeks, with gods and demigods fighting on both sides. According to Hesiod, the motives of the war could be traced to Zeus' desire to depopulate the Earth and exterminate the race of the demigods. In a reminder of Yahweh's plan to exterminate the Nephilim, Zeus vows to "destroy the lives of the demigods" so that "the children of the gods shall not mate with wretched mortals . . . but have their living and habitation apart from men."[31]

If the Trojan war was the event that sealed the fate of Pelasgian civilization in the East by eradicating the last traces of it from Anatolia, with Aeneas's migration to Italy, it also planted the seeds of Ancient Rome.[32] Thus this great migration, which led to the rise of Rome as a global power, had its origin primarily in the territories of Anatolia and northern Syria at the same time as the Indo-European invasions and the Israelites' conquest of

Canaan. Expelled from the East by Yahweh/Enlil/Zeus, the Canaanite Baal would return to the coasts of Italy, where he was known as Saturn.[33]

A CHAIN OF CATACLYSMS

The fragile equilibrium that followed the phase of the Nephilim wars in the Levant and Anatolia and the foundation of the second Pelasgian colony in Italy was again shattered in the twelfth century BCE by huge climatic fluctuations, as shown by tree ring and ice core data. It was around this time that all the great Mediterranean Bronze Age civilizations, many of which were just recovering from the effects of the Minoan eruption of the Thera volcano a few centuries earlier, went into an unexplained decline. The pattern of collapse was remarkably similar across the eastern and western Mediterranean, leading to the nearly simultaneous destruction and abandonment of most Minoan, Mycenean, Pelasgian, Hittite, and Canaanite cities.

People of the Ninth Bow

For centuries, archaeologists and historians alike have debated the causes of what has since become known as the Bronze Age collapse. The collapse was usually attributed to repeated incursions by Sea Peoples who invaded the lands of Egypt, Syria, and the Levant between the thirteenth and twelfth centuries BCE. Like all Sea Peoples invasions before it, this one, too, originated not in the Mediterranean but outside the Pillars of Hercules and may have been linked to the final submersion of the northern Atlantic islands of Thule and Scheria.

"They came from the sea in their war ships, and none could stand against them," we read in one ancient Egyptian text. However, a set of detailed bas-reliefs from the temple of Medinet Habu, showing long caravans of clumsy oxcarts filled with women and children, resembling more a train of refugees than a conquering army, confirm that these were no ordinary pirates.[34] They were a fair, tall, light-skinned race possessing exceptionally swift ships and weapons of wrought iron. Contemporaneous inscriptions referred to them as the Haunebu, the "people of the ninth bow," who inhabited the ninth climate of the Earth, extending from latitude 52° to 57° north.[35]

The hieroglyphs that accompany the bas-reliefs in fact speak of a great cataclysm that had befallen the land of the Haunebu in the far North, forcing their people to flee. One inscription reads “the head of their cities has gone under the waves . . . their land is no more.”[36] And also, “The great heat of Sekhmet . . . burned up their bones in the midst of their bodies. The shooting star was terrible in pursuit of them . . . a mighty torch hurling flame from the heavens.”[37]

Figure 13.2. Bas-relief from the temple of Medinet Habu, erected to celebrate the victory of Ramses III over the Sea Peoples (ca. 1178 BCE). The bas-relief shows a group of Sea Peoples warriors (with feathered helmets) attempting to protect the rearguard of their army from the onslaught of the Egyptians. The Egyptians made a deliberate point of portraying the Sea Peoples as a mighty conquering army, rather than the mass of desperates and refugees that they actually were. Note, however, the clumsy oxcarts filled with civilian women and children accompanying the Sea Peoples’ army by land.

Figure 13.3. Bas-relief from the temple of Medinet Habu (ca. 1178 BCE). Northern Sea People warriors are depicted wearing horned helmets of a type identical to the ones attested in northern and Celtic Europe and in Sardinia. Other members of the Sea Peoples coalition are shown as wearing what appear to be feathered or plumed helmets of a type hitherto unknown in Egypt and the eastern Mediterranean, but that would become common among the later Philistines.

In another text, the survivors recall the destruction of their islands, which were “uprooted and carried away” when the sea “broke forth and fell in a great wave on our towns and villages.”[38] The cataclysm, we are told, completely destroyed the lands along the western ocean belonging to the tribes of the Kel and the Meshwesh, and its consequences were felt as far as Libya.[39]

Using a language that reminds us of the Greek myth of the fall of Phaeton, an Egyptian text from the reign of Seti II[*34] similarly speaks of the “circling star” Sekhmet, which “spread out its fire in flames, a fire-storm in its tail.”[40] And in another inscription, this time from Ugarit, in northern Syria, we read of the mighty star Anat, which “fell from heaven” and “slew the people of the Syrian land.”[41]

The city of Ugarit was so utterly destroyed that it would take another 650 years before a Persian garrison would again reoccupy the ruins. Twentieth-century excavations revealed evidence of “massive fires and destruction throughout the ancient city.” According to excavation reports, the conflagration had reduced the walls to a “shapeless heap of rubble,” leaving in their place a destruction layer nearly 2 meters (6.5 feet) thick. The inhabitants must have “fled in haste,” leaving behind all their valuables, and never returned.[42]

Around the same time, in Greece, the great cities of Pylos, Mycenae, and Tyrins were similarly turned into smoldering ruins. “It must have been a conflagration of great intensity,” wrote the archaeologist Carl Blegen, “for the interior walls have in many places been fused into shapeless masses, stones converted into lime.” The fire was “hot enough to calcine stone and even to melt ornaments of gold.” At Mycenae, the walls were turned off axis and deformed by the intense heat generated by the blaze.[43] Not even Hattusas, capital of the mighty Hittite Empire, was spared. “The city was destroyed in a great catastrophe,” one excavator wrote. “Wherever we set our spades . . . we found unmistakable signs of a devastating fire that had consumed everything that would burn, reduced brickwork to reddened masses of slag, and made limestone blocks explode in fragments. . . . Nothing, not a house, not a temple, not a hut escaped it.”[44]

What kind of fire, we should ask, could have melted bricks into “masses of slag” and calcined stone at such incredibly high temperatures as to leave only a mass of vitrified rubble behind? What is more, the destruction was not limited to these sites, for throughout Greece, northern Syria, and Anatolia, city after city was laid waste in charred mounds of ashes and smoldering ruins. Not even the smallest, most insignificant villages were spared. They all went up in flames, like nearly every major city in the region, as far as Egypt. So did also the forests of Europe, as evidenced by a “burning horizon” of devastating forest fires extending from Germany through Scandinavia. Anatolia, Greece, and much of central and western Europe were almost entirely depopulated. The climate over large parts of Europe and North Africa became colder and drier, as the continental fires were accompanied by intense seismic and volcanic activity in the region of the Mid-Atlantic Ridge.[45]

Only Egypt, of all lands, was spared the fiery destruction, and for this reason, it became the most obvious destination of the immense masses of

desperate and dispossessed peoples fleeing the still smoldering ruins of their cities across Italy, Greece, and Turkey.

Embers of Mankind

Until recently, the Sea Peoples were usually held responsible for the devastation of such Bronze Age cities as Ugarit, Mycenae, and Hattusas and for the total extermination of the populations of the countries they moved in. We now know that the Sea Peoples only became the "plundering hordes" imagined by our historians after they had been themselves driven out of their own lands in the western Mediterranean and along the northern Atlantic Seaboard by natural cataclysms. Across Europe and the Levant, the Sea Peoples met with the survivors of the once proud cities of Italy, Greece, Turkey, and Syria, who had been able to flee the carnage and were now eager to join forces with them in search of better lands to the south and east, thus adding to the apparent complexity of the mob of invaders.[46]

Scientists now believe that a large comet fragment plunging into the western Mediterranean Sea in about 1175 BCE triggered a megatsunami that reached the coasts of Italy, Malta, Corsica, and Sardinia with waves of over 500 meters (1,640 feet) high.[47] In addition, airbursts may have occurred over the European continent, the North Atlantic Ocean, Anatolia, and Syria.

Figure 13.4. Typical boat of the northern Sea Peoples as depicted on the walls of the temple of Medinet Habu on the western bank of the Nile from Thebes, Egypt (ca. 1178 BCE).

On the island of Sardinia, the splendid Nuragic civilization came to a sudden end. As observed by geologist Mario Tozzi, mostly all the nearly eight thousand Nuraghi prehistoric towers of the south of Sardinia "appear to have been suddenly destroyed and reduced to heaps of mud and stones—all from the South-East," while the ones located on higher ground and in the north of the island were largely spared[48] (see Plates 53, 54, and 55). A mega-tsunami may have been the cause for the dispersion of the remaining population of Sardinia, first into central Italy (Compare the beautiful example of the corbel vault at Nuraghe Santu Antine shown in Plate 55, with the trapezoidal vaulting of another Pelasgian monument, the Cave of the Sybil in Cuma, near Naples, shown in Plate 56) and then into the eastern Mediterranean, where they would be remembered as the Sherden of Egyptian inscriptions, part of the great Sea Peoples coalition that reached the coasts of Egypt in the reign of Ramses III.

It is in light of evidence like this that we can affirm, as did Jürgen

Spanuth in his book *Atlantis of the North,* that it was *not* the Sea Peoples who devastated and burned up all the regions of the ancient Mediterranean from Italy to Anatolia, but the impact of a large fragmenting comet. Equally false is the assertion that the Sea Peoples "decimated" or even completely "wiped out" the populations of the lands they entered. Rather, they mixed with the remnants of the Mycenean and Pelasgian populations who had survived the catastrophe. Those who remained gave their name to the lands they settled in and laid the foundations of the great civilizations of classical Greece and Rome. It is a fact now recognized by many archaeologists, wrote Spanuth, "that the rise of early Greek culture is due to them and not to the pathetic remnants of the Mycenean population that had survived the catastrophes."[49]

The advent of the Bronze Age comet and the Sea Peoples invasions of 1200 BCE also allow us to set a date for the final sinking of Thule and of the last portions of Atlantis still above water. In the time comprising the end of the Younger Dryas and the second millennium BCE, a great seafaring civilization seemingly flourished on the last Atlantean islands of Thule, Scheria, and Tartessos, carrying the torch of neo-Atlantean civilization into the new age. Far from being a mere "plundering horde," these insular Atlanteans were a people of high culture, with a highly developed political, social, and military organization, which they carried with them into a Mediterranean that had been ruined and stripped of its inhabitants. New styles in art and architecture and new types of weapons, as well as an alphabet and the use of iron, would be among the last gifts of Atlantean civilization to the world.

THE GREAT REPLACEMENT—THREE THOUSAND YEARS AGO

New powers on Earth, new gods in heaven: The Bronze Age cataclysm of 1175 BCE not only triggered a new wave of Sea Peoples invasions from the northern Atlantic Seaboard, but also marked the end of the Hittite, Mycenean, and Minoan civilizations, as well as that of the great European megalithic civilization. New Indo-European peoples from the Asiatic and the Danubian steppes would fill the vacuum, shifting forever the genetic and ethnic balance of European populations and bringing the AtlanteanPelasgic cycle to an end

after nearly ten thousand years.

Beginning in about 4000 BCE, nomadic Indo-European tribes departed their central and western Asiatic homelands to spread in various waves throughout Europe and the Levant. However, they do not seem to have represented a major force in the eastern and western Mediterranean until at least the latter half of the second millennium BCE.

Prior to the time of the Hyksos invasions, contacts between the Indo-European Aryans and the indigenous post-Atlantean and Pelasgian populations appear to have been largely peaceful. A long period of peaceful cohabitation must have preceded the rise of Hittite power in central Anatolia, as reflected in the strong Hattian (pre-Indo-European) substrate of the Hittite language. Nor is it clear whether the Indo-European element ever represented more than a small part of the Hittite population. In Greece, the Indo-European influence before the second millennium BCE was mostly limited to the north, closer to Epirus and Thessaly. The Myceneans may have been the first Greek Indo-European speakers, inserting themselves on a then still largely pre-Indo-European, Pelasgian substrate, with links to Crete and the Aegean world. A study conducted in 2017 on a sample of nineteen Bronze Age skeletons from Minoan and Mycenean burials in Crete and on mainland Greece revealed that these two peoples were, in fact, genetically related, sharing at least three-quarters of their ancestry with the pre-Indo-European Neolithic populations of eastern Anatolia and of the Aegean region. However, the Myceneans differed from the Minoans in deriving additional ancestry from a source related to Indo-European hunter-gatherers from the Eurasian steppe.[50] The evidence is consistent with the hypothesis that the Indo-Europeans represented a relatively small minority group among populations of still largely pre-Indo-European (Pelasgian) descent. A major shift in the ethnic and linguistic makeup of European populations must have occurred at the time of the Bronze Age cataclysm, as the collapse of the Mycenean and Hittite kingdoms created a power vacuum that was filled by a new wave of Sea Peoples and Indo-European immigrants.

In Greece, the remnants of the Mycenean states were easily subjugated by a people known as the Dorians. Although earlier theories linked the collapse of Mycenean civilization to the Dorian invasions, it has now been demonstrated that nearly two hundred years separated the Late Bronze Age collapse from the beginning of the Dorian Geometric period in about 950

BCE.

Ultimately, the only reason the Indo-Europeans became the dominant force of the post-Mycenean world must be found in the fact that they settled in a land already devastated by cataclysms and nearly devoid of its original inhabitants. Nor could the Sea Peoples invasions of the twelfth century BCE significantly alter this balance of power, except perhaps for Italy and Canaan, and then only for so long.

Everywhere the Indo-Europeans settled, they mixed with the remnants of the earlier Pelasgian populations. Language, of all things, remains as perhaps the most distinctive contribution of the Indo-European Aryans to a universal European civilization. Even so, the process of language substitution from pre-Indo-European (Pelasgian) to Indo-European took several centuries. Etruscan survived as an independent language, separate from Latin, until at least the second century CE, while another language isolate, the Basque, is still spoken today by about one million people saddled between Spain and France. Even in the Indo-European Greek, Luwian, and Latin languages, the survival of a strong pre-Indo-European linguistic substrate testifies to the fact that the process of language substitution and assimilation may have often gone both ways. These language shifts, moreover, tend to overstate the changes in the ethnic composition of the underlying populations, as languages and cultural identities may become dominant even in the absence of ethnic replacement, so long as they appear to be linked to access to positions of prestige and power.

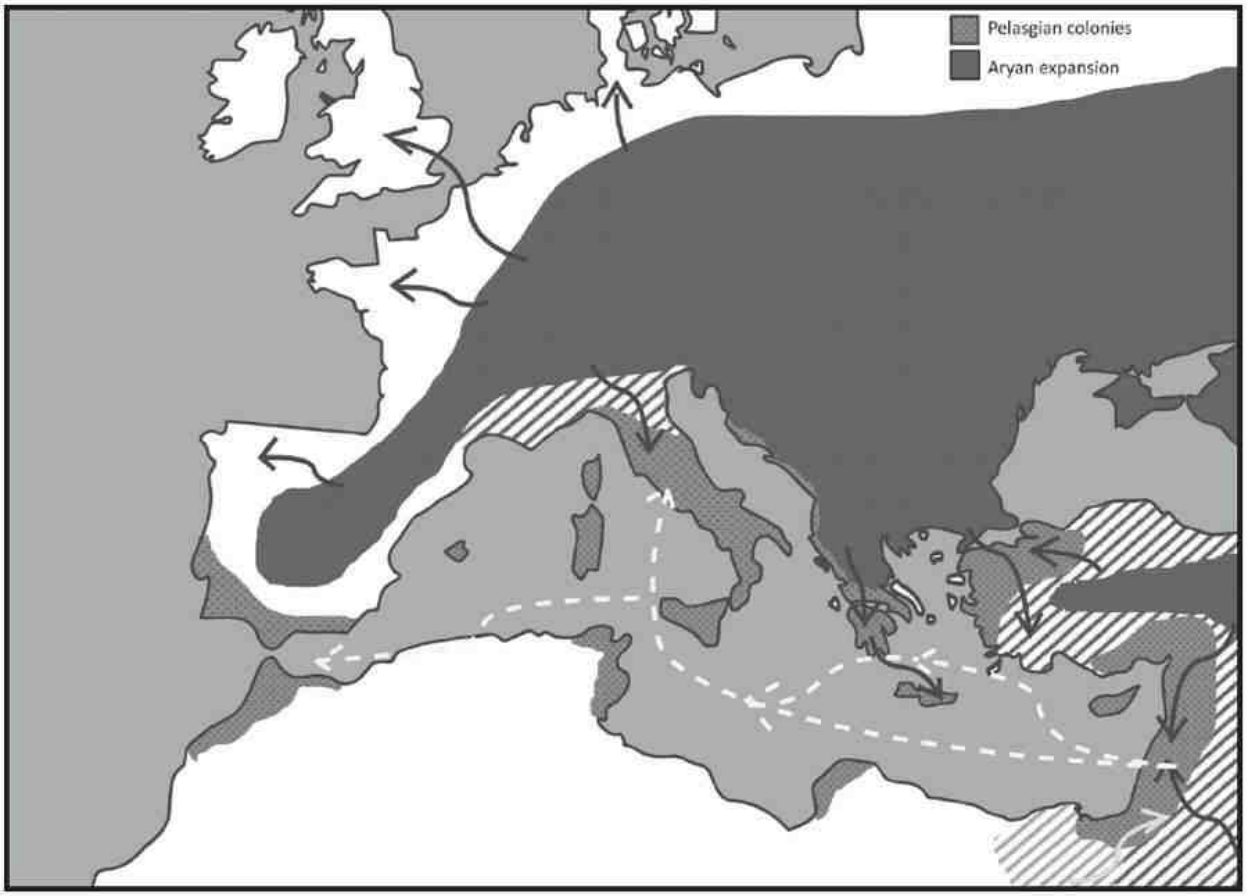

Figure 13.5. Diffusion of Pelasgian civilization and Indo-European expansion at the time of the Late Bronze Age collapse (ca. 1175 BCE). The solid arrows show the path of subsequent Indo-European invasions, and the dashed gray arrows show the likely migration routes of the Canaanite Pelasgians to Greece, Italy, and the western Mediterranean.

14

THE OTHER DIASPORA

Across the Atlantic to the New World

Could it be that the same Sea Peoples who settled along the coasts of Europe and Africa between the fourth and the second millennia BCE also reached the American continent?

The evidence from Mexico and Peru, however scant, nevertheless suggests that transoceanic contacts between the Old and the New World continued well into the post-Atlantean period. Nearly all pre-Columbian cultures preserved the tradition of the arrival from across the sea of people of a foreign race who brought with them a superior civilization. After the end of the last ice age, two great transatlantic routes existed: one through the North Atlantic and Thule, the other through the last Atlantean islands of Scheria and Tartessos.

The date of the last great arrival from Atlantis has been preserved as the starting date of the Maya calendar, on August 11, 3114 BCE. This was followed by a second migration reaching the coasts of Yucatan in about 1200 BCE. The beginnings of the Olmec civilization and of the earliest preclassical Maya states date to this same period. Another group may have sailed down the isthmus of Tehuantepec to South America, where it influenced the development of coastal Peruvian civilization.

Across the American continent, a great megalithic culture seems to have preceded the civilizations of the historical period, leaving behind mysterious stone monuments resembling those of Europe and the Mediterranean region. Dolmens, passage graves, mounds, and earthworks of a type virtually identical to the ones built by the Atlantic megalithic culture in Europe and North Africa are found throughout the entire American continent, from New England to Mexico, Peru, Colombia, and Brazil. Even more widespread, however, are the legends that speak of the arrival in ancient times of mysterious strangers from across the sea.

PEOPLE OF THE SERPENT

According to the Maya peoples of Chiapas and Yucatan, their ancestors had come to the coasts of Mexico from a land to the east, across the Atlantic Ocean. They called themselves Kaanul or Chanes, the People of the Serpent, and they founded a great empire that they called Valum Chivim or Xibalba, whereas Valum Votan was the name of their lost homeland across the waters. They built the great cities of Nachan (Palenque), Tulan (Tula or Teotihuacan), Mayapan, and Chiquimula (Copán), from which they ruled over the whole of Mexico and Central America. Such a story was collected in the seventeenth century by the bishop of Chiapas, Francisco Nuñez de la Vega, who based this account on a now lost manuscript of the Tzeltal called the Probanza de Votan.[1] A Palenque inscription, recently translated, confirms this belief in a long line of divine kings of Nachan stretching back over five thousand years. This dynasty's birthplace was in a mysterious land called Matwiil or Tokhtan, meaning "Mist Center," symbolized by a white cormorant.[2]

The Kaanul or Chanes may be the same people called Ah Canule or People of the Serpent in the Chilam Balam of Chumayel. According to this sacred book, these people first came from the sea to the island of Cozumel. Then, as the island was no longer capable of supporting their growing population, they founded the cities of Chichen Itzá, Izamal, Aké, and Uxmal on the mainland.[3] The Popol Vuh similarly describes their arrival from the East, following the bright planet Venus, whereas the sixteenth-century *Relación de Tzama* calls their leader by the name of Itzamna or Tzama, meaning "Serpent of the East."[4] By 1200 BCE, Quetzalcoatl was identified

with the “Feathered Serpent” on a famous Olmec stela from the site of La Venta. It was Quetzalcoatl who, according to the ancient peoples of Mexico, taught them the arts of farming, music, architecture, and astronomy, as well as being the inventor of the calendar. His origin was in the East, hence this god’s association with the “morning star,” Venus, and the mythical Aztlán.[5]

It is among the Olmecs that we find the earliest traces of the cult of Quetzalcoatl. Yet the Olmecs must have been themselves the inheritors of a much earlier culture, for by their earliest beginnings in the second millennium BCE, they already possessed a perfectly developed civilization and calendar, testifying to a long period of development of which there is no trace in the archaeological record. It is as if the Olmec and Maya civilizations came to the American continent already fully formed, their inventions never equaled or surpassed by any later culture or civilization in Mesoamerica until the time of the Spanish conquest.

Mysterious Ancestors

A great megalithic civilization must have once existed in Mexico—a race once powerful and clearly very advanced in the arts of civilization, which vanished long before the time of the Aztecs and that may have influenced both the mysterious Olmecs and the preclassical Maya. To this mysterious race may have belonged the original megalithic builders of Teotihuacan (see Plates 57, 58, 59, 60). This grand “City of the Gods” was said to have existed before our present sun shone in the sky. Further megalithic remnants of this vanished race may be found near Teotihuacan, at Tezcotzingo, where an entire mountain was sculptured in terraces and rock-cut basins, stairways, and tunnels (see Plate 61), and also at Coatlinchán, near Mount Tlaloc, where a colossal 168-ton statue lay abandoned in its quarry until 1964 (see Plate 62).

These people may have also been the builders of the many megalithic ruins of unknown age that are found throughout the unexplored highlands of Morelos, Oaxaca, and Guerrero. “They say that they came from the sea on ships, a multitude of them,” notes Bernardino de Sahagún, who adds, “They landed on the shore of the sea; to the North . . . from there they went on, led by their priests and by the voice of their gods. Finally, they came to the place that they called Tamoanchan . . . and there they settled from some time. But it was not for long, for their wise master left, took again to their ships . . .

bringing back with them all their holy books and their sacred images."[6]

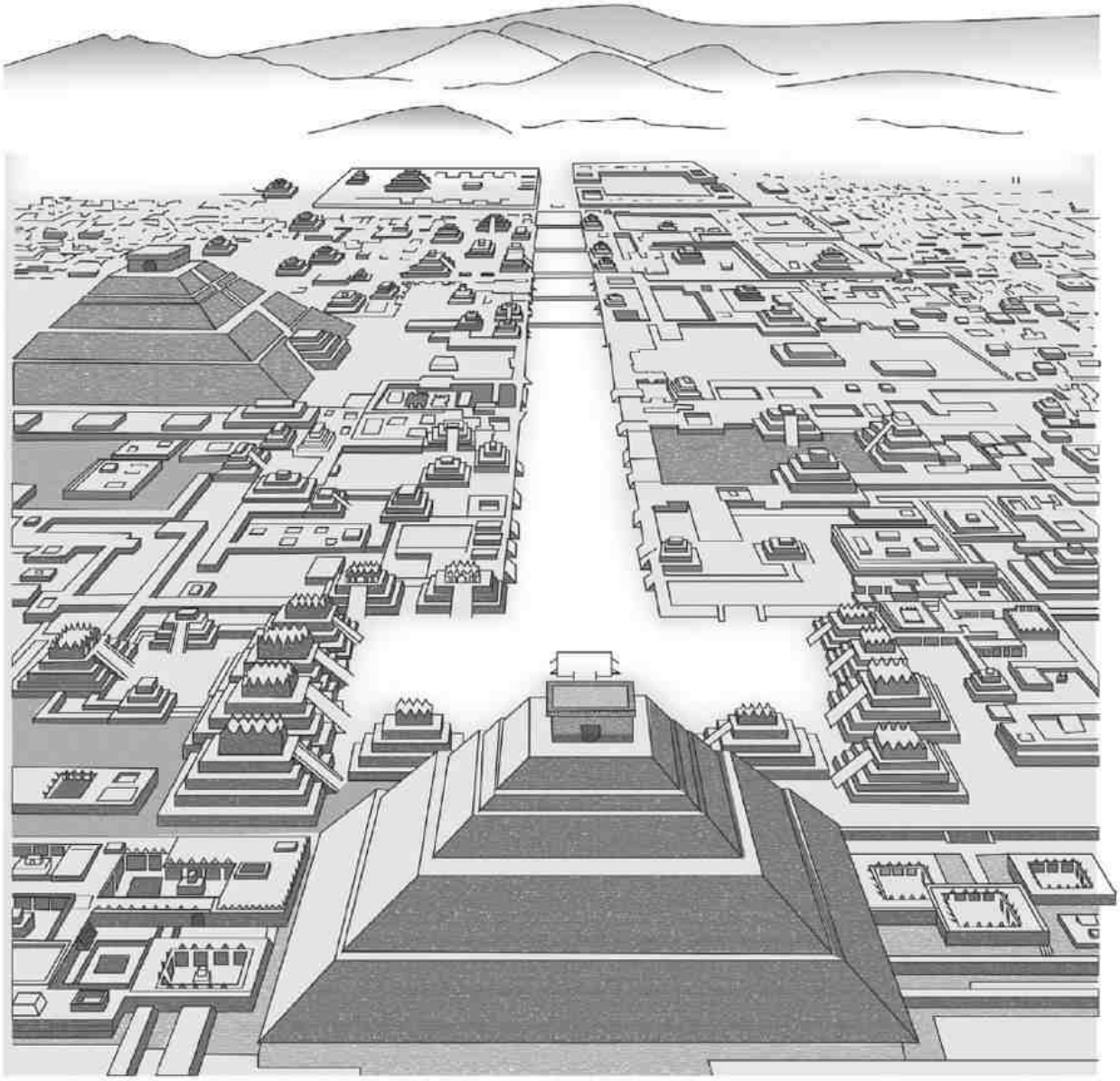

Figure 14.1. Reconstruction of the ancient city of Teotihuacan, near Mexico City, with the Pyramids of the Sun and the Moon and the Avenue of the Dead.

It is quite possible that the name Tamoanchan comes from the Maya, meaning "Place of Serpents." It was already a legendary place in the time of the Aztecs, who situated it to the south of Mexico. It is there, in the highlands

of Morelos, that the famous antiquarian Francisco Plancarte y Navarrete found, near the village of Chimalacatlán, cyclopean ruins and walls of cut stone blocks, which he believed had once belonged to the great city of Tamoanchan (see Plate 63). “The entire region,” wrote the explorer William Niven, “is littered with ancient ruins, covering a very large area,” all part of a great prehistoric city “fully as large as Babylon, or Thebes, or Memphis, or other famous cities of antiquity.”[7] These ruins, Plancarte y Navarrete believed, belonged to a culture that would from there spread to the north, east, and south to give rise to the great civilizations of the Toltecs, the Olmecs, and the Maya.

Bearded figures and others with seemingly European or African features are not infrequent in Olmec art. Similar depictions are found at Monte Albán and Mitla, always associated with the same style of megalithic construction. Some of the stones at Mitla and nearby sites measure over 6 meters (20 feet) long and weigh as much as 30 tons (see Plates 64, 65, 66, and 67). Legend has it that these ruins were not the work of the local population, but of a foreign people who came in ancient times from Tollan.[8] Megalithic are also some of the earliest Maya structures at Palenque (see Plates 68 and 69), Aké, and Izamal, as well as at the lowland Guatemala sites of El Mirador, Tintal, and Nakbé. At El Mirador, one of the earliest and largest Maya sites discovered to date, a dynasty of “Snake Kings” is attested since the middle of the first millennium BCE, possibly related to the legendary Chanes, or “People of the Serpent.” The largest pyramid at El Mirador, called La Danta, contained an astonishing 100 million cubic feet of rock, rising to a height of over 70 meters (230 feet).[9] El Mirador flourished centuries before the great classical Maya kingdoms of Tikal, Palenque, and Copán—its origins still shrouded in mystery.

The chronologies of the great Mesoamerican civilizations of the Olmecs, the Maya, and the Toltecs suggest that their mythical founders and culture heroes Votan, Quetzalcoatl, Itzamna, Kukulkan, and Gucumatz were, in fact, the leaders of different migrations that introduced civilization to the coasts of Mexico over a period of hundreds, if not thousands, of years. These people did not stop at the edge of the ocean, but acted as if in the furtherance of a concerted plan, some moving westward into Anahuac, to Teotihuacan, and Tula (see Plate 70), others heading south to Chiapas and Guatemala. Wherever they went, they conquered not by force and strange weapons, but

through kindness and compassion, performing miracles and imparting their wisdom.

Even then, however, this golden age did not last. The lineage of the original People of the Serpent became consumed in feudal strifes and internecine wars. Those who could leave took again to the sea, and it is possible that some might have even reached South America to continue there their civilizing mission.

FOAM FROM THE SEA

According to the chronology of Peruvian kings of Fernando de Montesinos, it was in about 1500 BCE that “a great throng of strange people disembarked upon the coasts [of Peru] from rafts and boats, which formed a great fleet.”[10] Upon landing in Peru these people found the land already inhabited and ruled by a powerful dynasty of kings of Cuzco. The invaders, whose arrival was said to have been accompanied by a variety of marvels and portents in the sky and a continuous trembling of the earth, were met by an army from Cuzco. In the battle that followed, however, the king of Cuzco, Titu Yupanqui Pachacuti, was fatally wounded and his army disbanded. Thus, writes Montesinos, “was the government of the Peruvian monarchy lost and destroyed.”[11] Those of the race of the “sons of the sun” who survived took refuge in the secluded mountain fortress of Tampu Tocco, which Hiram Bingham believed he had finally identified in the ruins of Machu Picchu. It would take centuries before another Inca dynasty could again reclaim the city of Cuzco in the ninth or tenth century CE.

In the north of Peru, the same tradition of the arrival of peoples of a foreign race from across the sea was perpetuated in the myth of Naylamp, the founder of the Moche and Sicán civilizations and the first in a long line of kings who would still rule the area of Lambayeque in the fourteenth century AD. The story of Naylamp as a great culture hero and civilization bringer is, however, much older, for it can be found already among the Moche people in the second century CE. It was drawing from these myths that the German archaeologist Max Uhle first proposed in the early decades of the twentieth century the theory of a Mesoamerican origin of the great civilizations of the north of Peru. Like the Maya and the Olmecs, the Moche and Sicán peoples

also built huge step pyramids along the coast (see Plate 71). Their art and rituals, which, like those of the Maya, included the practice of human sacrifice through the extraction of the heart of the still-living victim, similarly reflect what Uhle called a clear “Maya” influence from Mesoamerica.

Even though the beginning of monumental architecture in the north of Peru has now been dated to the fourth and third millennia BCE, nearly two thousand years before the beginning of the Olmec and Maya civilizations, the cultivation of maize, a crop originally from the Mexican highlands, does indeed suggest some early contacts between Peru and Mesoamerica.

Until the discovery of Caral and the Norte Chico civilization, Peru’s Chavin culture held the title of “mother culture” of the Andes. The art of Chavin, which dates to about 900 BCE, bears strong similarities to that of Tiwanaku, but also to early Olmec art (see Plate 72), suggesting that Chavin may be in fact the “missing link” between the culture of the altiplano and the civilization of the coast.

All of this points toward the existence of at least two distinct poles of civilization in ancient Peru; one in the Andes, having its center in the region of Cuzco, Tiwanaku, and Lake Titicaca, and the other on the coast. The first center belonged firmly within the neo-Atlantean tradition, of which it represented a direct continuation, while the second reflected the influence of various elements of possibly Mesoamerican or even transPacific origin. Chavin represented perhaps the synthesis of these two opposed cultures and poles of tradition. Its legacy would be picked up first by the Wari, the founders in the sixth century CE of the first true South American empire, and then by the Incas.

With the conquest of Cuzco by Francisco Pizarro and the execution of Atahualpa, the last Inca emperor, in 1533, fell also the last remnant of neoAtlantean civilization in the West, nearly ten thousand years after the fall of the last neo-Atlantean Empire in the East. Many of the treasures of this great Andean empire, and of the civilizations that preceded it in the Andes of Peru, still await to be found. As Pedro Cieza de León wrote in 1554, “If, when the Spaniards entered Cuzco they had not committed other tricks, and had not so soon satisfied their cruelty in putting Atahualpa to death, I know not how many great ships would have been required to bring such treasures to old Spain, which are now lost in the bowels of the earth.”[12]

Tradition says that there the treasure will lie until the last vestiges of

European rule will have disappeared from the whole of North and South America.[13]

PART VI

THE LEGACY

15

THE END OF THE JOURNEY?

Until when can we truly speak of a genuine survival of the Atlantean tradition? In the Americas, some remnants of the Atlantean tradition survived until the time of the Spanish conquest in the sixteenth century CE. Since then, however, the systematic destruction of the Maya codices by the Inquisition has deprived us of the opportunity to access this once vast body of knowledge. In South America, the ignorance of letters and the loss of oral traditions have created an even greater vacuum.

In Egypt, the last known hieroglyphic inscription was written in 394 AD, a mere few years after the Edict of Thessalonica had made Christianity the state religion of the Roman Empire. The last of the pagan sanctuaries, the Temple of Philae (see Plate 73), was closed officially in 537 AD. It was only in a clandestine form that the Atlantean mystery tradition, transformed through the teachings of Hellenistic Hermetism, continued in the Byzantine and Arab East.

The fate of the Atlantean tradition in the West appears to have been an unusually dark one. What has survived has done so under almost unimaginable circumstances. Archaeological research may one day be able to piece together the scattered fragments of this lost treasure, yet the system as a whole may always lie beyond conjecture because the masterminds who created it have vanished long ago.

MYSTERIOUS MONUMENTS

Why then do certain themes of the Atlantean tradition keep resurfacing, often after thousands of years, in places as far apart as pharaonic Egypt, medieval France, and Cambodia? Is it even possible that, through all this time, parts of the Atlantean tradition could have been kept alive and preserved from destruction by secret groups of initiates around the world, like a phoenix waiting to return?

Walking around the ruins of ancient temples, one often has the feeling of a ghost ship encounter. The ship is still miraculously sailing, although all the crew and passengers have somehow, inexplicably, disappeared. It is almost as if, at some point in time, a whole organization had been set in motion with that specific departure in mind. Often, entire temples were either deliberately dismantled or covered over, as if in preparation for some impending cataclysm. Several authors have since speculated that the ancient Egyptians, Khmer, and Maya peoples may have left their colossal architectures behind as a memorial of their own achievements and a warning to future generations. These inexplicable "departures" of tradition appear, moreover, to have coincided with some very critical moments in the history of civilization.

Like a Phoenix from Its Ashes

According to R. A. Schwaller de Lubicz, the gestation of the Egyptian civilization of the pharaonic period took place over nine symbolic months, corresponding to the nine decans of the precessional ages of Gemini, Taurus, and Aries.[1] It was only in the ninth month that the "fetus" would finally see the light. This occurred during the Ptolemaic period (332–30 BCE), which marked the end of the Egyptian mission and had therefore as its goal the "opening of the doorway" through the revelation of the teachings of the past. It was at this time and in the first centuries CE that many of these teachings were for the first time committed to writing in what would later become known as the *Corpus Hermeticum.*

In previous epochs, the temple had been the sole instrument for the teaching and transmission of esoteric knowledge, telling in stone the story of the creation of man and of his relationship with the universe.[2]

Taken as a whole, the temples of Egypt throughout the length of the Nile

represented a complete teaching, whereas each temple could be seen as a particularly developed theme or chapter.[3] This system could have hardly arisen by chance, and Schwaller de Lubicz believed that this was in fact necessarily the work of an elite. “Obviously,” he wrote, “no one would build such monuments, and in such great numbers, over thousands of years, for uncultivated peasants. This work was of necessity that of an elite, and even more remarkably, an elite that never ceased to renew itself, an elite that seems to have been uniquely endowed with a wealth of scientific knowledge and an understanding of the laws of life.”[4]

This vast body of knowledge appears already complete and fully formed since the time of the earliest dynasties, an immutable science that knew neither development nor evolution during over four thousand years of pharaonic history. It is difficult to speak of fortuitous coincidences when through the millennia one finds the same images and symbols used over and over again to convey the same esoteric truths and to designate the same abstractions. All of this must have at some point existed as a conceived plan that was directed by powerful masterminds whose only mission seems to have been the unadulterated transmission of knowledge through the ages.

This seems to be particularly the case around those periods of destruction and upheaval that usually accompany the end of a precessional age or cycle. The same symptoms characterize these moments of passage: a tendency toward materialism, an apparent democratization of knowledge and social processes, the repudiation of traditional metaphysics and religious forms, and political disorder, often accompanied by seismic or other terrestrial disturbances. “Rationally,” continues Schwaller de Lubicz, “it is not comprehensible how the sole fact of the vernal point [the point in the sky where the sun rises at the spring equinox] aiming at a constellation can produce such phenomena by passing into a new sector. The fact nevertheless remains and can be verified.”[5]

We now find ourselves in the middle of an identical crisis marked by the transition from Pisces into Aquarius. Two thousand years ago, with the closing of the temples that had been the guardians of a very ancient science founded on knowledge, the individual research known as Gnosticism arose. In the same way, we now see a similar transition in the present epoch characterized by a decline of traditional religious forms accompanied by a renewal in the West of older forms of spirituality that have their roots in the

Atlantean tradition.

The Mystery of the Cathedrals

During the Ptolemaic period, a set of texts purporting to be the original writings of the god Thoth began circulating in Alexandria. Known as the *Corpus Hermeticum,* these texts dealt with various aspects of esotericism, magic, and philosophy and exerted the greatest influence on the then still nascent currents of Gnosticism. After the closure of the temples in 391 AD, it was the Gnostics who kept alive the flame of the Hermetic tradition in the Byzantine East. Persecuted by the church, many Gnostics found refuge at the empire's eastern borders. For many of them, the ancient city of Harran, in southeastern Turkey, became a safe haven and the seat of an important university where they were free to continue their studies and impart their teachings (see Plates 74, 75, and 76). Known as the Sabians, or "People of the Stars," they professed to be followers of Hermes Trismegistus and held the Hermetica as their sacred texts.

Certainly, an important esoteric school still existed in Harran as late as 1032 CE, when a Muslim mob destroyed the temple of the moon god Sin, together with many priceless works of classical and Hermetic philosophy. Harran was again to suffer destruction by the Mongols in 1260 CE, a devastation from which it never recovered. Yet the teachings of the Sabians and of the various Gnostic and esoteric groups that operated within the walls of its ancient university did not die. They permeated instead the doctrines of the Paulicians, the Bogomils, and the Cathars, heretical groups preaching an extreme form of dualism, which from the Byzantine East spread throughout Europe by way of the Balkans and northern Italy.

It was at the time of the Crusades, between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries CE, that many elements of eastern Hermetism and Islamic Sufism were again brought into Europe, perhaps by those very Knights Templar who are believed to be at the origin of many currents of modern Freemasonry and Western esotericism.

The Order of the Poor Fellow-Soldiers of Christ and of the Temple of Solomon, as the Templars were originally known, was founded in 1119 in Jerusalem. What led a group of nine impoverished knights to becoming one of the wealthiest and most powerful orders in Western Christianity may

forever remain a matter of speculation. Legend has it that the Knights Templar had discovered during their excavations conducted under the ruins of Solomon's Temple some very ancient and powerful relic, perhaps the same "indeterminable treasure" mentioned in the Copper Scroll of Qumran (first century CE), which may have included a trove of ancient Hebrew and Syriac manuscripts.[6] It was this sacred knowledge, handed down from remote antiquity, that constituted the real "Templar treasure." Within a few decades from the foundation of the order, the Cathars of northern Italy and southern France began to embrace a dualist doctrine that apparently was based on Eastern Gnosticism. At the same time, Gothic architecture made its first appearance in northern France. This simple fact has fueled speculation that the Knights Templar may have been behind the introduction of the Gothic style, which they brought from the East, into Europe. While in Jerusalem, it is possible that the Templars had acquired documents related to the construction of the Temple of Solomon that contained detailed instructions on how to build such a temple following the precepts of sacred science.

Like the Temple of Solomon and the ancient Egyptian temple, the Gothic cathedral was a sanctuary of the tradition, built according to the principles of esoteric science. As Schwaller de Lubicz observed, "The general plan of a cathedral corresponds to an exact canon: two towers, a narthex, a nave—triple and with seven windows, as a rule—on the walls of which the Stations of the Cross are later drawn. Then comes the transept, and then the entrance proper to the Sanctuary."[7]

The same layout, he noted, can be observed in the Egyptian Temple of Luxor. "Two pylons, the court of Ramses as the narthex, the double row of seven high columns with open corollas forming the naves with two subsidiary naves whose lateral walls are decorated with bas-reliefs representing the procession of the Barque. After the nave, with its two rows of seven columns, the peristyle extends East and West, forming a cross (the transept), then comes the covered temple, whose parallelism with the cathedral's choir is striking. The high altar, represented here by the Naos containing the sacred Barque, is located in the choir proper."[8]

Just as the Egyptian temples represented a complete sequence along the Nile dedicated to different *neters*, or cosmic principles, so in Christian tradition specific attributes were assigned to a given saint to whom a church was consecrated. All these attributes, expressed either through sculpture or

painting, became in their own way true “hieroglyphs,” capable of revealing through symbolism an esoteric teaching that could not be conveyed by words.[9] The Gothic cathedral was thus not merely a work of Christianity, but also a veritable book of stone whose pages were written inasmuch in the language of art and architecture as in that of number, volume, and proportion.[10]

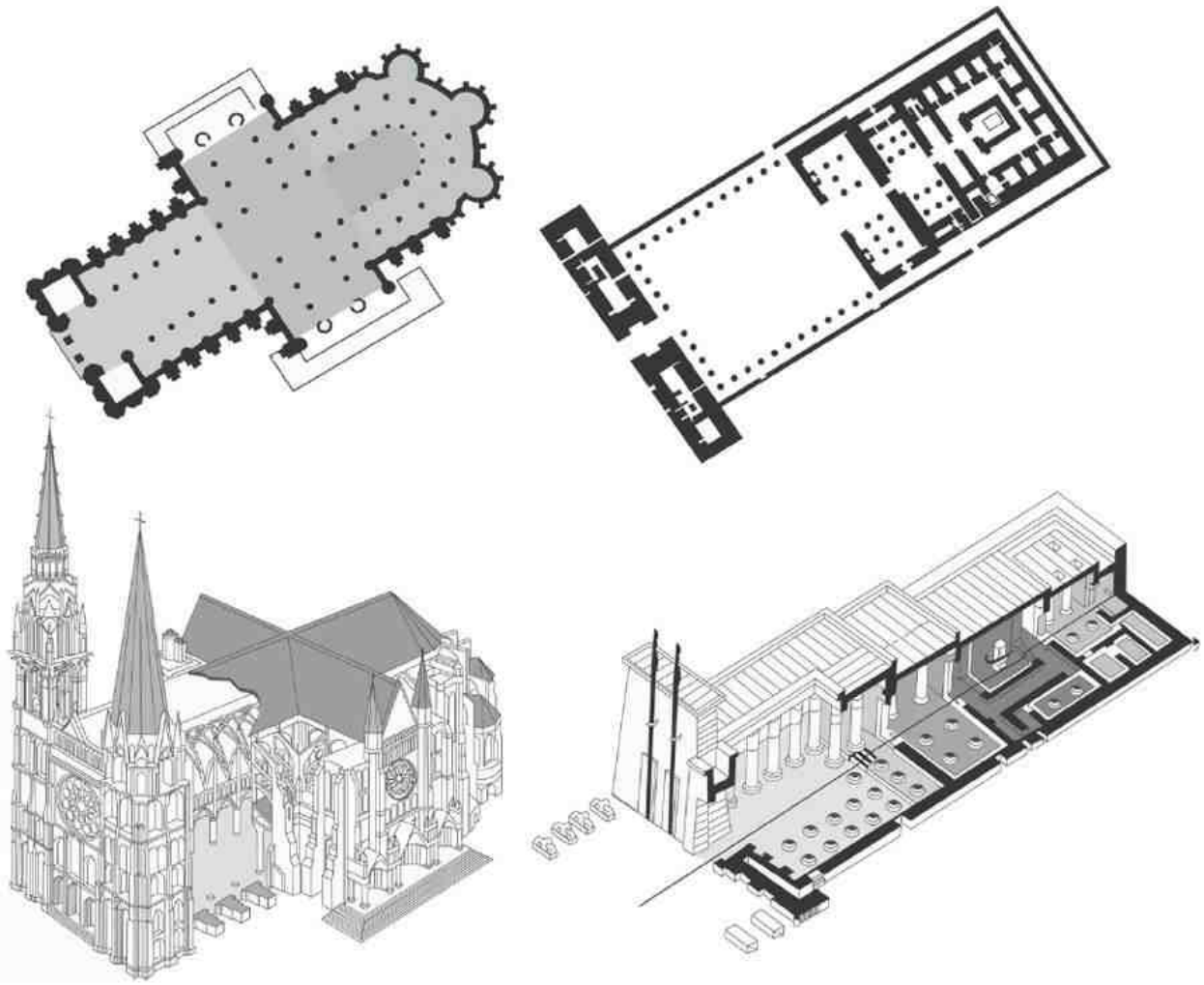

Figure 15.1. Comparison between the plan and elevation of a Gothic cathedral and of an Egyptian temple.

As if to honor the fundamental principle of Hermetic science for which the Earth is the “image of Heaven,” the Notre Dame cathedrals of northern France, comprising those of Paris (see Plate 77), Chartres, Amiens, Bayeux,

Evreux, Laon, Etampes, Reims, Notre Dame de l'Epine, Abbeville and Rouen, mirrored on the ground the position of the stars of Virgo.[11] This incredible surge in temple building at the end of the twelfth century CE coincided with an unusually close encounter of our planet with the Taurid meteor stream (in 1178 CE), which has been linked throughout history to meteorite showers and global climate change. Could the Gothic cathedrals, too, have been built with the intention of encoding some very ancient knowledge and preserving it for future generations? It can hardly be a coincidence that at the same time as the Knights Templar were at work to encode the principles of their sacred science in the fabric of the Gothic cathedrals, on the other side of the world another enlightened priesthood was busy erecting their great temples in the jungles of Cambodia.

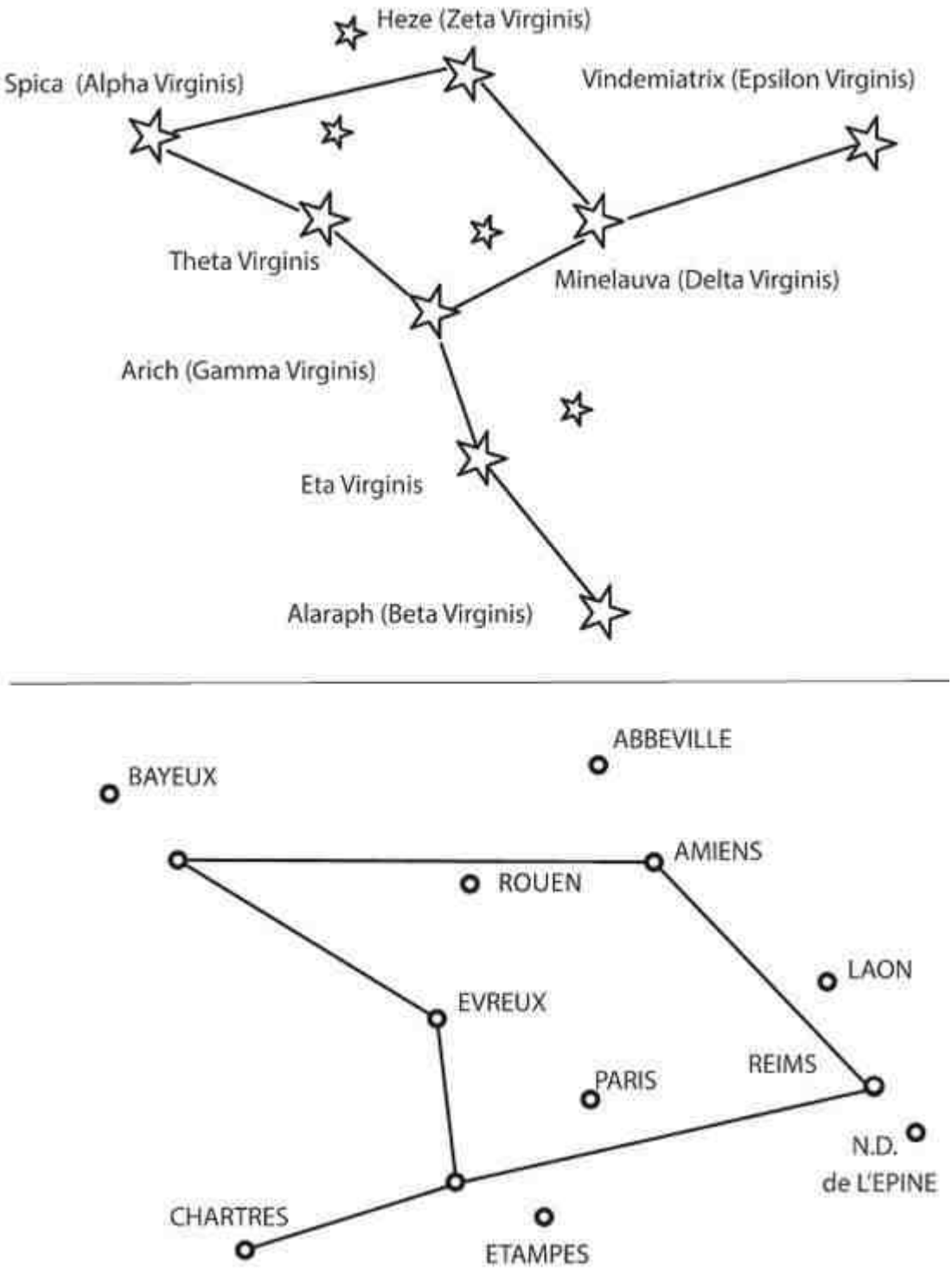

Figure 15.2. Diagram comparing the locations of the Notre Dame cathedrals of northern France with the layout of the stars of the constellation of Virgo (after Charpentier 1975).

Angkor, City of the Celestial Dragon

Little is known of the origins of Angkor before the eleventh century CE, when, within fewer than three hundred years, a volume of stone greater than that of all the Egyptian pyramids combined was used to build an astonishing seven hundred temples covering an area of 600 square kilometers (232 square miles). Then, as mysteriously as it had appeared, this civilization vanished in the fourteenth century CE, leaving only its deserted palaces and temples behind.

The first Khmer king to rule over Angkor was Jayavarman II. Legend has it that Jayavarman spent many years at the court of the "King of the Mountain," who ruled from a mysterious land identified by some with Java or the Himalayas. From this king, Jayavarman received the mission of founding a new dynasty and a new capital by assuming the title of *devaraja*, or god-king. The result of the following three centuries of Khmer rule was a complex of temples unequaled in the world, formed of colossal pyramids surrounded by moats, palaces, temples, and a vast network of canals and artificial lakes that may rank among the greatest human creations anywhere on Earth. Yet despite the long succession of kings, each contributing his own monuments, the impression is still that of a harmonious whole, as if the whole design of Angkor and its temples had been conceived, at least in certain minds, since the very beginnings of its empire.

The key to Angkor's secret geometric plan lies once again in the stars. It is thanks to the intuition of researchers John Grigsby and Graham Hancock that we now know that the entire city, with its great pyramids and mountain temples, was designed as a precise terrestrial representation of the constellation of Draco. Not as it was visible in the eleventh century CE, however, but seemingly *upside down*, as it could only have been seen at dawn on the spring equinox between 11,000 and 10,450 BCE, at the moment of its lowest culmination in the entire precessional cycle.[12] Moreover, the entire city of Angkor appears to have been designed as a colossal working model of precession, as is evidenced by the obsessive repetition of the precessional numbers 48, 72, 540, and 1,296.[13]

For the Hermetic philosophers, the Earth was the "image of heaven," and in an Angkor inscription, we read that "the land of Kampu is similar to the Sky." This was the essence of the deva-raja ceremony performed by King Jayavarman II at the beginning of the Khmer Empire, a magical act involving

the creation of a colossal copy of the heavenly order on Earth, according to the principle of “like attracts like.”[14] This ceremony, intended to realize the sacred marriage of heaven and earth, was apparently performed multiple times across the whole of the Khmer territory. Mathematicians Jean-Pierre Lacroix and Robert Bywater have, in fact, discovered a relationship between the siting of the principal Khmer monuments and components of enormous Indian planetary diagrams that were “drawn virtually on the Angkorian ground.”[15]

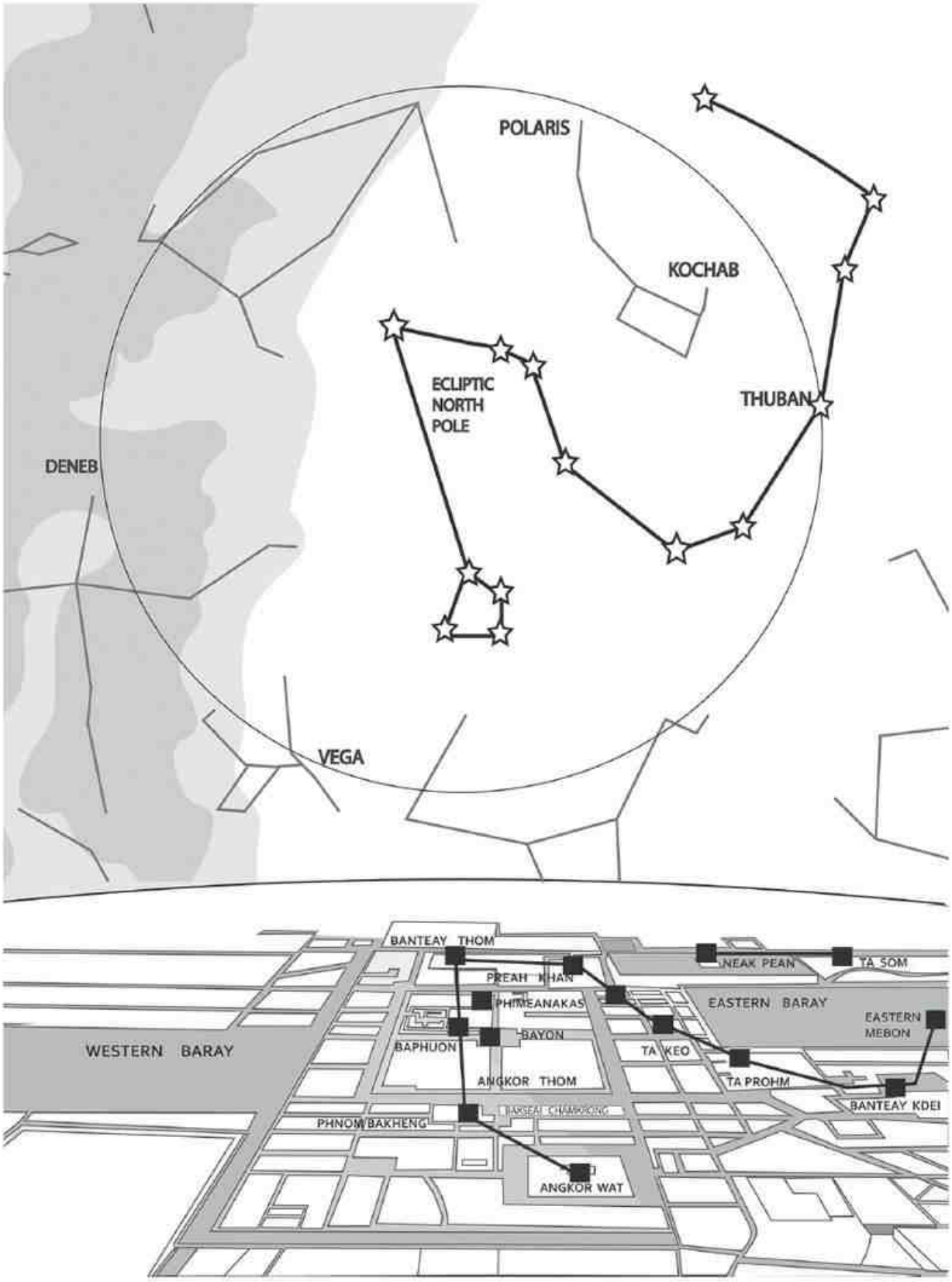
POLARIS
KOCHAB
ECLIPTIC
NORTH
POLE
THUBAN
DENEB
VEGA
BANTEAY THOM
NEAK PEAN
TA SOM
PREAH KHAN
PHIMEANAKAS
EASTERN BARAY
EASTERN
MEBON
WESTERN BARAY
BAPHUON
BAYON
TA KEO
ANGKOR THOM
TA PROHM
BANTEAY KDEI
PHNOM BAKHENG
BAKSEI CHAMKRONG
ANGKOR WAT

Figure 15.3. Diagram comparing the locations of the main temples of Angkor with the layout of the stars of the constellation of Draco.

Where did this apparently “out-of-place” knowledge originate? Khmer legends attributed its origin to the Nāgas, a mythical race of serpents said to have once ruled over a great Pacific continent and who had since then been living underground. Nothing comparable to the scale and complexity of Angkor had ever arisen in any region of Southeast Asia or the Indian subcontinent before the eleventh century CE. What is more, the peculiar conception of sacred space and architecture expressed in the monuments of Angkor survived unaltered through the passage of different dynasties, including the advent of Buddhism, only to suddenly and mysteriously disappear at the turn of the fifteenth century CE. Over four thousand years and an entire continent separated the obscure beginnings of Angkor from the flourishing of the Egyptian Old Kingdom, yet the basic ideas are the same. One wonders if truly the same “Invisible College” might have been at work in the temples of Egypt, at Angkor, and in the Gothic cathedrals of Europe, tirelessly pursuing the same goal of building heaven on earth and turning men into gods. (See Plates 45, 78, and 79. Also compare the structure of a Khmer mountain temple with that of a typical Maya pyramid, as shown on Plate 80 from Tikal, Guatemala.)

THE INVISIBLE CENTER

Could the same hidden forces have been secretly directing the course of human history for thousands of years and, if so, from where and through which channels?

The esoteric tradition maintains that the sacred center of the present cycle was deliberately concealed at the beginning of the Kali Yuga, about six thousand years ago.[16] As the Kali Yuga progresses along its course, the sacred center, too, has become increasingly more hidden and closed, its secondary centers and outward manifestations equally rare. Thus, writes René Guenón, “In Europe every consciously established link with the center by means of regular organizations is now broken, and this has been so for

several centuries."[17]

It was with the Renaissance and the Reformation that came the complete and final rupture. Since then, continues Guenón, "The deposit of effective initiatic knowledge has not been preserved by any Western organization."[18] This may explain why, over the last couple of centuries, Western esotericists have increasingly been looking at Asia as the sole depository of the wisdom of the ages during the present epoch. Thus, according to certain accounts, the Holy Grail was returned to the kingdom of Prester John, which is believed to lie somewhere in the Orient, in the same way as the true Brotherhood of the Rose Cross was said to have left Europe for Asia shortly after the Thirty Years' War.[19] Yet perhaps the most famous account of all remains that of Alexandre Saint-Yves d'Alveydre's *Kingdom of Agharta.*

The Kingdom of Agharta

Writing in 1886, Saint-Yves d'Alveydre described Agharta as a mysterious and inaccessible kingdom located to the north of India and ruled by a powerful monarch called the "King of the World." According to another French writer, Louis Jacolliot, Agharta existed as a prehistoric "City of the Sun" until it was moved underground at the beginning of the Kali Yuga. The people of Agharta were said to possess a level of technology far in advance of our own and to preserve in their libraries the entire wisdom of the ages. They would also on occasion send emissaries to the outside world, of which they had perfect knowledge. Legends of the underground kingdom were also collected by the explorers Ferdynand Ossendowski and Nicholas Roerich during their journeys through central Asia. In their writings, the legend of Agharta overlaps frequently with that of Shambhala, the two representing perhaps the opposite poles of the Aryan and the Atlantean traditions. The same traditions that speak of Shambhala as the "white" city of the initiates of the right-hand path associate Agharta with black magic and the dark arts. Depending on the source, the supreme leaders of either city are described as evil, tyrannical sorcerers or as godlike and benevolent "Lords of the World."

In Search of the Hidden Masters

If a conclusion can be drawn from these esoteric legends, it is that the masters

may be everywhere, perhaps even under our feet, yet, at least for the common men and women, they are nowhere to be found. The Theosophical Society was, in the nineteenth century, one of the last organizations in the West to claim direct contact with the "Masters of Ancient Wisdom." The goal of the Theosophical Society was no less than the spiritual renewal of the West, inspired by the doctrines of Eastern philosophy. Much of the society's teachings were based on communications allegedly received from entities that called themselves "mahatmas." These entities, whether physical or not, claimed to be the ambassadors of an international fraternity of adepts that for centuries had been watching over the spiritual development of humanity from its seat in the Himalayas.[20]

Another early-twentieth-century authority who claimed a direct connection with the masters and their spiritual hierarchy was the Armenian mystic and philosopher George Ivanovich Gurdjieff (1866–1949). In his book *Meetings with Remarkable Men*, Gurdjieff described his search for the mysterious Sarmoung Brotherhood, said to have possessed great knowledge and the key to many secret mysteries.[21] This brotherhood was said to have originated in "Pre-Sand Egypt" or Mesopotamia, from where it then journeyed east into central Asia.

Many of these ideas had been already circulating in Europe since the early seventeenth century, after the appearance of the so-called Rosicrucian Manifestos. The manifestos claimed to be the work of a secret group of adepts, followers of the fourteenth-century knight Christian Rosenkreutz. Legend has it that the founder of the order had met in Damascus a group of sages who introduced him to the mysteries of Hermetism. He then journeyed to Egypt, Arabia, Morocco, and Spain in search of the source of esoteric knowledge. Prior to his death, he committed to writing all the secret teachings of the order, including "a compendium of all things past, present and to come," which he buried in a vault that was not to be opened until a suitable time would come for their universal revelation.[22] The time came in 1614, when the first of the Rosicrucian Manifestos was published in the German city of Kassel. The manifestos declared the existence of a secret fraternity of adepts, alchemists, and sages whose goal was no less than to bring about a universal transformation of the arts, science, religion, and politics. The echo of this publication was enormous, for in the following years, hundreds of pamphlets were published in Europe by people trying to

make contact with the mysterious brotherhood.

The manifestos would have the greatest influence on Sir Francis Bacon's utopian novel *New Atlantis*, published posthumously in 1626. In his novel Bacon described an ideal society ruled by a college of initiates and presided over by a sort of Hermetic priest-king, whose mission was the advancement of science and the cultivation of wisdom.[23]

If anything, the Rosicrucian Manifestos marked the first appearance in the West of a central esoteric theme, that of the existence of a secret brotherhood of adepts possessing faculties and powers far beyond those of ordinary humans and working behind the scenes to shape the course of history. Yet for all their knowledge and good intentions, we can see that the Rosicrucians' program of universal reformation failed. Although Rosicrucianism certainly remains at the core of many contemporary esoteric movements, it is a fact that, as Joscelyn Godwin aptly points out, "Whereas the Rosicrucians of 1614 wanted to renovate the world, the modern groups sailing under their banner have no social effect, but provide individuals with teachings and practices for self-improvement through occultism."[24]

In short, Godwin adds, "The philosophers who, according to Plato, should have been compelled to be our rulers, or at least to be the power behind the throne, have packed their bags and left."[25]

If we take the tradition of the Rosicrucians' departure for the East at the end of the Thirty Years' War literally, then it is clear that the renovation of the world heralded by the Rosicrucian Manifestos and in Bacon's *New Atlantis* is still far from manifesting itself, leaving a struggling humanity once again abandoned to its own devices. "The doors of the sanctuary are agape," writes Godwin. "But where are the hierophants, adepts and sages that one hoped to find there? Most of us seem to be thrown back to our own resources —lonely travelers among the ruined monuments of ancient mysteries."[26]

EPILOGUE

THE CYCLE CONTINUES

Our long journey from the beginnings of the Atlantean period to the present day has taken us to the rather disheartening conclusion that every link with the original sacred center of the present cycle is now broken. Most of us will find little consolation in Guenón's reassurance that the sacred center is not truly lost, but became hidden at the beginning of the Kali Yuga and will manifest again at the start of a new cycle or world age.[1]

All the various attempts at establishing this link anew, either by means of secret organizations such as the Rosicrucians or by the conscious application of the principles of Hermetic science, as with the Gothic cathedrals and the mysterious monuments of Angkor, have likewise failed. More and more frequently, the "signs of the times" are around us, prefiguring the imminent dissolution of the present cycle. "Even though it may be destined to disappear, modern civilization is certainly not the first to become extinct, nor is it the one after which none will follow," wrote Julius Evola almost a century ago. "In the life of what is conditioned by space and time, lights are continually being put out and kindled again, cycles end and new ones begin. . . . Only the ignorance of modern man has induced him to believe that his civilization, which is characterized by the deepest roots in the temporal and contingent element, will enjoy a different and privileged fate."[2]

Thus, in no way does the end of the present cycle signify the end of the material universe itself. Instead, the dissolution of the old is a prerequisite for ushering in the beginning of a new cycle or manvantara.[3]

According to Guenón, before a civilization modeled on the canons of tradition can be established and the original sacred center manifested again, humanity will have to go through an epoch of inverted spirituality coinciding

with the lowest point in the cycle. This is precisely what is known in Christian tradition as the “reign of the Antichrist.” This reign will concentrate in itself all the powers of countertradition and counterinitiation and will be made even more dangerous by presenting itself as a disguised and counterfeit golden age. To use the language of the Hindu tradition, the Antichrist will manifest itself as an inverted chakravartin, or “king of the world,” while being in fact merely the “prince of this world.”

The present humanity finds itself in a double impasse. On the one hand, the elements that would allow the present civilization to overturn its course, to transport and elevate itself toward the planes of light, are entirely lacking —even more so since every connection with the original sacred center has been broken. On the other hand, the present cycle has not yet reached the turning point that will allow for a *rectification* of the world and a return to traditional values as advocated by Guenón. To use again the words of Evola, “There is no future for modern civilization as a whole.”[4]

The forces of tradition will until then remain hidden, waiting for the moment when the present cycle has completed its course and the conditions are ripe for their return.

After the fall of Atlantis, the world entered a period of obscurity during which the foundations of the present epoch of dissolution were laid. Twice did humanity attempt the reconstruction of the Atlantean Empire, yet the negative forces of the present cycle prevented them from succeeding. The cycles have to take their course before such a universal transformation can be again attempted. Therefore, wrote former grand master of the Ancient Mystical Order Rosae Crucis Raymond Bernard (1923–2006), “The sages of Atlantis refused to reconstitute the old empire, and thus concealed the entire body of their preserved knowledge. . . . It was not just a single country or continent, but the entire world that had to become a New Atlantis.”[5]

What makes the present epoch of transition unique and different from any that preceded it is that the danger lies now not merely in the destruction of a continent, but of an entire world. Until this day, wrote Bernard, the sages have helped to preserve the sacred wisdom of Atlantis, waiting for a time when humanity would again be ready to retake its teachings without the danger of bringing on themselves the fires of self-destruction. Only then will the Atlantean sages reveal themselves to the world.

Today, we see a revival of the interest in Atlantis and the occult history of

humanity. According to Bernard, this is not by chance, but is itself a consequence of the incarnation on this plane of existence of entities that had previously occupied Atlantean bodies during the last golden age.

In a way, the whole course of human history during the last few thousand years may be seen as a preparation for the return of Atlantis. From the ashes of the old world, a new world based on the immortal principles of tradition will be born, even if it takes thousands of years. This will be truly a restoration of all things to their original form.

In the end, the gods will return, and Atlantis will rise again.

Footnotes

*1 Even before Schoch, in the 1960s, the French philosopher and esotericist R. A. Schwaller de Lubicz had first claimed evidence of water erosion on the body of the Sphinx. “A great civilization,” he wrote, “must have preceded the vast movements of water that passed over Egypt [in 10,000 BCE], that leads us to assume that the Sphinx already existed . . . whose leonine body, except for the head, shows indisputable signs of aquatic erosion.”

*2 Edfu, ancient Behdet, was the capital of the second nome of Upper Egypt since early dynastic times. Several predynastic tombs were found at Edfu in 2004, dating to as early as 3600 BCE.

†3 For more information on the Edfu Project, see the Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen website.

*4 The *Bhagavata Purana* is also known as *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* or *S’rîmad Devî Bhâgawatam.* Estimates for its composition range between the sixth and eighth centuries CE.

*5 Joscelyn Godwin, after René Guenón, *Traditional Forms and Cosmic Cycles*.

*6 Information on years of reign not reported by Berossus but known from other historical accounts.

*7 Nippur Tablet B reports a total of 14,409 + N years for the sum of the four dynasties of Kish.

*8 The total years of reign attributed to the twenty dynasties in Nippur Tablet B are 28,876 + N years

*9 In 2009, previously unknown fragments were discovered in the storage rooms of the Egyptian Museum of Turin. A new edition of the papyrus is expected.

*10 Shem generated Arphaxad two years after the Flood.

*11 The order of the antediluvian kings in WB-444 and Berossus has been rearranged to match the order for WB-62.

†12 Each Greek name in the Manetho column (e.g., Hephaestus) is presented along with the name of the Egyptian god (e.g., Ptah) that was considered its equivalent.

‡13 Atlantean kings are not sequential in Plato's account.

§14 Gadeiros is more common in the Latin translations of Plato, whereas Eumolos is a literal translation of the original Greek.

*15 This city, whose name literally means City of the Falcon, is not to be confused with the late pre-dynastic and early dynastic-period city of the same located in Upper Egypt. This latter city, also known as Nekhen in Ancient Egyptian, became the religious and political capital of Egypt during the time of the early Dynasties (ca. 3200–3100 BCE). It was named Hierakonpolis by the Greeks in honor of the Falcon-god Horus that was worshipped there. The original "City of the Falcon," which is mentioned in the Edfu Building Texts, would have been a much older, prehistoric city, probably located near the coast where Alexandria later stood. Very extensive submerged ruins located off the coast of Alexandria at considerable depths could be the site of the original Hierakonpolis founded by the Shemsu-Hor (followers of Horus) at the beginning of the neo-Atlantean period.

*16 A haplogroup is a term used by geneticists to indicate a combination of genetic variants that are inherited together from a single parent, either on the matrilinear or patrilinear line; mtDNA haplogroups are defined by mutations in the mitochondrial DNA inherited from the mother's egg cells, whereas Y-chromosome DNA haplogroups are inherited by males only from the father's Y-chromosome.

*17 "Poseidon mated with Celaeno, and their son Lycus was settled by his father in the Isles of the Blest and made immortal." Hellanicus of Lesbos (ca. 490 BCE), "Atlantis"—a now lost poem on a fragment from the Oxyrinchus papyrus 11, 1359.

*18 Marinus of Tyre chose the parallel of Rhodes, at latitude 36° north as the "true to scale" parallel for his projection.

*19 The earliest extant copy of the map was published in Venice in 1558.

*20 The recent discovery of prehistoric rock art and megalithic structures on one of the islands of the Azores provides independent confirmation for this hypothesis. See Matos, "Prehistoric Rock Art."

*21 Indicates the most accurate or reliable source considered for this date.

*22 Abu Yazid al Balkhi (ca. 850 AD) dated the construction of the Great Pyramid to 72,000 years before the Hegira (622 CE); that is, 71,378 BCE. See Howard Vyse, *Operations,* appendix.

*23 The Vendidad mentions that the first three levels could each house a population of one thousand people, with 600 people in each of the next three (middle) levels and 300 people in each of the three smallest ones, for a total occupation of 5,700. Later commentaries of the Avesta provide slightly different figures.

*24 The neo-Atlantean Hierakonpolis (City of the Falcon) is not to be confused with the dynastic-period city of the same name located in Upper Egypt. See footnote *15 avobe.

*25 This probably refers to Hestiaeus of Perinthus (fourth century BCE), one of Plato's students.

*26 In some esoteric and New Age traditions, ley lines are straight alignments of prominent natural landmarks and ancient sites. The term was coined in the 1920s by the English antiquarian Alfred Watkins after he observed that many of the prehistoric monuments that dot the British landscape are in fact aligned. Ley lines on the ground are believed to either reflect the path of telluric currents, underground water streams or lines of force of the Earth's magnetic field.

*27 The time from 12,870 BCE to 11,053 BCE may have coincided with the period of Aryan rule over Egypt, which is alluded to in the esoteric tradition. See Besant and Leadbeater, *Man: Whence, How, and Whither.*

*28 The Lincoln Cathedral, built in the fourteenth century, would have been a few meters taller, but only including the spire.

*29 Tatunca Nara was later exposed as Günter Hauck, a native of Coburg, Germany. See Nehberg and Brög, *Secret of Tatunca Nara.* Even so, many still believe in the authenticity of the story contained in Brugger, *Chronicle of Akakor.*

*30 This latter account of the miraculous arrival of the Túatha dé Danann on the coasts of Ireland is based on the sixteenth-century *Annals of the Four Masters,* a work based on sources that are now entirely lost.

*31 This suggests a division of the circle into 366 degrees instead of the 360-

degree circle we use today, with each degree divided into 60 arc minutes and each arc minute divided into 6 arc seconds. If this theory is correct, the megalithic yard would have been a perfect subdivision of the Earth's polar circumference as 366 MY × 60 × 6 × 366.

*32 See manuscript 5237/2 in the Schøyen Collection. The Schøyen collection, housed in Oslo and London, is one of the largest private manuscript collections in the world.

*33 From the Lamentation for the Destruction of Ur, tablet 9, lines 216–17.

*34 Seti II is widely accepted to have reigned from 1203 to 1197 BCE. However, I have found very significant differences in the dates of reign attributed to different pharaohs depending on the source consulted.

Endnotes

INTRODUCTION. AMONG THE RUINS

1. Sahagún, *Códice matritense*, 191–92.
2. Plato, *Timaeus.*

CHAPTER 1. WORLDS BEFORE OUR OWN

1. Curtis, *Cave Painters.*
2. Clottes, *Return to Chauvet Cave*, 232.
3. Rappenglueck, “Eine Himmelskarte aus der Eiszeit?” 391–404; and Whitehouse, “Ice Age Star Map Discovered.”
4. Curry, “Göbekli Tepe.”
5. Mann, “Birth of Religion.”
6. Mann, “Birth of Religion.”
7. Collins, *Göbekli Tepe.*
8. Hancock, *Magicians of the Gods*, 34–46.
9. Schoch, “Appendix: Redating the Great Sphinx of Giza,” in *Voyages of the Pyramid Builders*, 278.
10. Lawton and Olgivie-Herald, *Giza: The Truth.*
11. Graham Hancock, *Fingerprints of the Gods.*
12. Reymond, *Mythical Origin of the Egyptian Temple*, 9.
13. Reymond, *Mythical Origin of the Egyptian Temple*, 76.
14. Reymond, *Mythical Origin of the Egyptian Temple*, 20.
15. Reymond, *Mythical Origin of the Egyptian Temple*, 90.
16. Reymond, *Mythical Origin of the Egyptian Temple*, 109–14.
17. Reymond, *Mythical Origin of the Egyptian Temple*, 136, footnote 1.
18. Reymond, *Mythical Origin of the Egyptian Temple*, 184–87.
19. Aguilar, “Stelae of Xochicalco and Quetzalcoatl.”

20. Clube and Napier, *Cosmic Serpent.*

21. Morante López, “El templo de las serpientes emplumadas.”

22. Aguilar, “Stelae of Xochicalco and Quetzalcoatl,” 135.

23. Plato, *Dialogues of Plato (Timaeus).*

24. Plato, *Dialogues of Plato (Timaeus).* Also from Plato, *Dialogues of Plato (Critias):* “Nine thousand was the sum of years which had elapsed since the war which was said to have taken place between those who dwelt outside the Pillars of Heracles and all who dwelt within them.”

25. Plato, *Dialogues of Plato (Critias).*

26. Plato, *Dialogues of Plato (Timaeus).*

CHAPTER 2. ATLANTIS AND THE CYCLES OF TIME

1. Hesiod, *Works and Days*, 121–39.

2. Hesiod, *Works and Days*, 140–55.

3. Hesiod, *Works and Days*, 156–69.

4. *Bhagavata Purana, 3.11.19.*

5. Godwin, *Atlantis and the Cycles of Time*, 302.

6. Plato, *Dialogues of Plato (Critias).*

7. Walter Cruttenden, *Lost Star*, xx.

8. Walter Cruttenden, *Lost Star*, xxi.

9. Godwin, *Atlantis and the Cycles of Time*, 159.

10. Ussher, *Annals of the World.*

11. Morley and Sharer, *Ancient Maya*, 571.

12. Thompson, *Rise and Fall of Maya Civilization*, 12–13.

13. Cicero, *De Divinatione*, book I, 19.

14. Diodorus Siculus, *Library of History*, book I, 31.

15. Pliny the Elder, *Naturalis Historia*, book VII, 193.

16. Schwaller de Lubicz, *Sacred Science*, 87.

17. Eusebius of Caesarea, *Chronicon* (from Syncellus).

18. ETCSL Project, “Sumerian King List.”

19. Langdon, “Historical Inscriptions.”
20. Young, “Mathematical Approach,” 123–29.
21. ETCSL Project, “Sumerian King List.”
22. Jacobsen, *Sumerian King List,* 128.
23. Breastead, “Palermo Stone,” 51–72.
24. Schwaller de Lubicz, *Sacred Science,* 86.
25. Meyer, *Chronologie Egyptienne,* 164.
26. Schwaller de Lubicz, *Sacred Science,* 87.
27. Syncellus, *Ecloga chronographica*, 30.
28. Schwaller de Lubicz, *Sacred Science,* 87.
29. See Herodotus, *The Histories*, II, 142.
30. Schwaller de Lubicz, *Sacred Science,* 87.
31. Schwaller de Lubicz, *Sacred Science,* 110.
32. Syncellus, *Ecloga chronographica* (after Manetho—probably via Ptolemy of Mendes or Panodorus).
33. Goetz and Morley, *Popol Vuh,* book III, chapter 2.
34. Goetz and Morley, *Popol Vuh,* book III, chapter 2.
35. Von Humboldt, *Researches,* 19–33. Other authors report slightly different numbers.
36. Alford, *Gods of the New Millennium,* chapter 13.
37. mEusebius of Caesarea, *Praeparatio evangelica,* book I, chapter 10.
38. Pliny the Elder, *Naturalis Historia,* book VI, 59.
39. Lawton, “Problems with King Lists.”
40. Anklesaria, *Iranian or Greater Bundahishn*, 36:1–9.
41. Anklesaria, *Iranian or Greater Bundahishn*, 36:5.
42. Godwin, *Atlantis and the Cycles of Time,* 302.
43. Fergusson, quoting De Maille, alternatively expresses this figure as 3,279,000 years, 2,760,000 years, or 3,276,080 years from the time of the first man; *Chinese Chronology and Cycles*, 80–81.

CHAPTER 3. THE CALENDARS OF ATLANTIS

1. Godwin, *Atlantis and the Cycles of Time*, 171.
2. Guenón, *Traditional Forms and Cosmic Cycles*, 25, footnote 3.
3. Frothingham and Marquand, "Archaeological News," 388.
4. Zhirov, *Atlantis, Atlantology*, 375.
5. Seneca, as quoted in Mayer Burstein, *Babyloniaca of Berossus*, 15.
6. Neely, "Astronomical Dating."
7. Howard Vyse, *Operations*, 330.
8. Collins, *From the Ashes of Angels*, 339.
9. Steiner, *Atlantis and Lemuria*, 57.
10. Godwin, *Atlantis and the Cycles of Time*, 167.
11. Blavatsky, *Secret Doctrine*, 256.
12. Zhirov, *Atlantis, Atlantology*, 90.
13. Zhirov, *Atlantis, Atlantology*, 90.
14. Zhirov, *Atlantis, Atlantology*, 91.
15. Coon, *Story of Man*, 238. Unfortunately, no specific source is given by Coon for this particular fragment.
16. Coon, *Story of Man*, 238.
17. Charles, *Book of Enoch*, chapter 17, 1–8.
18. Charles, *Book of Enoch*, chapter 17, 1–8.
19. Cory, *Ancient Fragments*, "Berossus," 26.
20. Cory, *Ancient Fragments*, "Berossus," 25.
21. Kramer, "Enki and Ninhursag."
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